



50th
Anniversary
1954 — 2004



Providence Baptist Church

~ connecting past, present and future ~

Providence Baptist Church 1954 - 2004

Dr. James H. Sasser

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THE HISTORY OF
PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

1954-2004

James H. Sasser

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CONTENTS

Pastor's Message	iv
Dedication and Mission Statement	vi
Introduction	vii
Chapter 1. The 1950s.....	1
Chapter 2. The 1960s	21
Chapter 3. The 1970s.....	82
Chapter 4. The 1980s	156
Chapter 5. The 1990s	274
Chapter 6. 2000-2004	391
Appendix	451
Index	484

Pastor's Message

The ninth chapter of Acts tells the story of a chosen man named Ananias who followed the lead of the Lord. Ananias was told to go and seek out a man named Paul and, then, affirm him and encourage him. So, Ananias did exactly as commanded and located this man named Saul. He said to Paul, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately Paul got up and was baptized and began his historical mission. There are two "chosen ones" in that story. We quickly recognize Paul, but Ananias was also a chosen one. Whether in the headlines or in the background chosen ones are still being called out in service to the risen Lord.

Fifty years ago a small group of people followed the leading of God and began a labor of love that has, in turn, produced a long list of chosen ones. The dream of a church on the corner of Hunter Lane and Randolph Road was more than just a desire to change the landscape. The dream was to build a community of faith that would influence and change the lives of thousands of people in the decades to come. That dream is still alive today and continues to get bigger. Because of what continues to happen on this special corner, lives are still being changed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Providence Baptist Church is not a building or an address. Providence is a community of faith on a mission. That mission is no less intense today than it was with those who assembled in simple surroundings fifty years ago. Our mission is clear and as important today as it was in the beginning. As a congregation and as individuals, we believe that a relationship with Christ is the most important thing in life. Our goal is simple—we want to encourage an experience with Christ. For those within the congregation we want that experience to grow in meaning and joy. For those outside who have never experienced the joy of that relationship, our goal is to do all we can to make that experience a reality in their lives.

The opportunities for influence that make up the present and future for Providence are not the result of accident or just good luck. Two vital dynamics have made our present day opportunities

possible. First, there is the sacrificial spirit of those who dreamed the dream early on and willingly offered resources of time, talent and money to Providence Baptist Church. The present day facilities came about due to faithful stewardship, just as the present day ministry of Providence is the result of time and energy. The history of the past fifty years is replete with sacrificial commitment that has made Providence the strong community of faith that is now celebrated.

Second, Providence would not be enjoying the fruits of past labors today if God had not blessed the efforts of those who dreamed big. Just as the handprints of those who precede us are all over this facility, so is the clear embrace of God's arms around the history of these past fifty years. God needed a community of faith on this corner, ministering to this immediate community and beyond. Providence is a part of God's providential plan.

Which brings me back to where this started, with Ananias and Paul. The future has a need for both Ananias and Paul. For some the charge is simply to empower others, just as Ananias did. For some it is to be the visible, out front "Paul types." The opportunities are unlimited for both. The willingness of committed believers is all that matters.

Our celebration today is of the past and the future. The past fifty years gives us much to lift high and offer thanks. The next fifty years will give us cause to reach high for God's strength and guidance as we seek to be as loyal and committed as those who preceded us. The challenge is to celebrate the past and at the same time aim our best resources and committed lives to the redreaming of the new dream. God-inspired dreams must not be left to just the past. The dream is still alive. As we read about the history of the past fifty years, we must embrace our dream of the next fifty. The future is out there. With God's help we can help shape it. You are invited to be a part of the next fifty.

Grace and peace,

Al Cadenhead, Jr.
Senior Pastor

DEDICATION

*This book is dedicated to the
167 Charter Members
who saw the need and provided the sustenance
to build a place of worship that sends the
Good News of Jesus Christ around the world.*

MISSION STATEMENT

Connecting People and God
In Christ through Worship,
Fellowship and Missions.

INTRODUCTION

Providence (the will of the Creator who is actively involved in moving his creation to a goal) Baptist Church today has a membership of 2,200 with a ministerial and support staff of 40 led by Dr. Al Cadenhead, Jr. The church campus complex consists of 24 acres that border on Randolph Road and Hunter Lane near the Cotswold Shopping Mall.

The Providence membership and staff are eagerly looking forward to and planning for May 2004, the church's 50th Anniversary Celebration. A key part of that preparation is the publication of Providence's first history book. The book's objective is to tell how a few "special" people with faith, vision and the guiding hand of the Holy Ghost built a beacon of light to Jesus Christ in rural Mecklenburg County that has, in the 21st Century, become a national leader in spreading the Good News of the Gospel.

Individual chapters tell the history, roles of key persons, the pastors, staff, program development, missions, music ministry and youth activities. The church Mission Statement and Long-Range Plan are presented in detail. The Appendix contains a list of charter members, deaths, bylaws, pastors, ministerial staff, budgets, and relevant statistical data for future reference.

The text materials came from a variety of sources: church bulletins, weekly newsletters, past anniversary history written information, oral and video interviews with staff and church members. The photographs were collected from church members, scrapbooks and church archives.

The author would like to say a "special thanks" to friend and history buff Selby Daniels, for his love of Providence and acute sense of history. Church Business Administrator Jim Martin also deserves credit for his many contributions. Lastly, Sherry Clontz of Jostens was very helpful in all phases of the publication process. Many others helped by providing information and support when needed. To all of you, I say "thank you!"

This 50th Anniversary Church History has been a four-year labor of love and dedication to Providence Baptist Church. I am glad that it is over. There might be errors and omissions for which I will take responsibility. My only regret is that everyone who played a role in this great 50-year spiritual adventure could not be listed.

James H. Sasser
February 2004



Chapter 1

The 1950s

Charlotte, in 1950, had a population of 135,000 and was succumbing to “urban sprawl,” with many residents fleeing the city for new outlying communities, like the Cotswold area, the Park Road Shopping Center (1957) and the Charlottetown Mall (1959), Charlotte’s first enclosed mall. In turn, many downtown merchants followed their customers to the suburbs.

The 1950s was the era of the Cold War and the Korean War, with lingering memories of the Great Depression and World War II. For many it was a time to reflect upon the past and to prepare for a generation of rapid change initiated by the invention of the “transistor.” It was the beginning of the “space age” and the eventual, unthinkable voyage to the moon.

Religiously speaking for Charlotte, 1947 was highlighted by native son Billy Graham’s first crusade at the First Baptist Church which led to the formation of his own evangelistic team and worldwide ministry. May 18, 1954, was a special occasion. President Dwight D. Eisenhower came to Charlotte to participate in the 179th Anniversary Celebration of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence (Charlotte’s most defining historical event) and to speak at the dedication service opening Freedom Park. More than 60,000 persons attended the dedication.

It was during this decade of transition and rapid change that led a small contingent of spirit-filled Baptists to begin the quest to form a new church beyond the city limits in rural Mecklenburg County. A true vision of faith led to the Providence Baptist Church that we know today – a beacon that daily helps spread the Gospel message to the nation and beyond.

The Providence story began with a small group of persons, members of other Baptist churches, who were interested in forming a new Baptist church in southeastern Mecklenburg County. The Providence Road area, some distance from the Charlotte city limits, was attractive because several new residential housing developments were drawing large numbers of new families.

Providence Baptist had no formal sponsor; however, credit goes to Myers Park Baptist Church which sponsored a series of meetings, during the summer and fall of 1953, which led to the formation of a group. These Sunday meetings, mostly in private homes, soon led to the formation of the church itself. The object of these meetings was to solicit input, interest, need and commitment toward the formation of a new Baptist church in the Providence Road community. Starting on November 1, 1953, these Sunday meetings were held at 7:45 pm in "The Hut," a recreational lodge located on the property of Dr. and Mrs. L. F. Bumgardner on Meadowood Lane – about one block out Randolph Road from the church. In late December, they voted to hold the regular Sunday services at 4:45 pm, beginning on January 3, 1954, so members could attend preaching and Training Union services in their own churches. It also made it easier to secure the services of local pastors for preaching at the new Providence Baptist Church. The first church Family Night activity was held on December 29, 1953, at 7:00 pm at The Hut. It included group singing, motion pictures, fellowship and refreshments. This first Family Night was so successful that they began a once-a-month Family Night so that all the families could attend and share in a fellowship hour.

Written records do not show the number of persons attending these Sunday preaching services. However, the December 31, 1953, Financial Statement showed that November and December offerings totaled \$534.79, with disbursements of \$244.98, leaving a balance of \$289.81. The first "actual count" of vesper service attendance started on January 3, 1954, with 44 reported and an offering of \$241.

On January 12, 1954, a planning meeting was held at the home of the Russell E. Tuckers to develop a "program of work" and set up church committees. Twenty-five persons attended and the following committees were formed:

Church Moderator, E. R. Echerd, Jr.

Pulpit, A. S. Bumgardner, Chair

Music, Mrs. R. M. Gill, Chair

House, W. M. Edwards, Chair

Usher, Howard M. Byrum, Chair

Parking, William M. Porter, Chair

Building Fund, Wm. M. Scruggs and R. E. Tucker, Co-chairs

Building Survey, L. F. Bumgardner, Chair

Enlistment and Visitation, M. Clyde Griffin, Chair

On January 25, several members participated in the North Carolina State Leadership Week sessions at the First Baptist Church. Attendance exceeded 2,400, the largest central training school ever sponsored, up to that time, by the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board.

These Sunday meetings in The Hut gradually evolved into fully organized worship services that included Sunday School and youth activities. By the end of January 1954, the services were drawing an average of 60 regular attendees and financial pledges totaling nearly \$5,000. As the services began to draw larger numbers of worshippers, more meeting space was needed. In addition, Al Edwards, an early leader in the growing fellowship, wrote and sponsored the church's first Mission Statement:

A group trying to gain strength to build a church and provide adequate facilities for every service connected with a Baptist church and have a place and program for every age group.

This led to discussions with Charlotte school officials about renting the auditorium and classrooms at the Eastover Elementary School located at 500 Cherokee Road, behind the Mint Museum of Art on Randolph Road. The Charlotte School Commission met on April 9, 1954, and voted to permit Providence Baptist to rent the Eastover School auditorium for \$60 per month. Thus, Eastover Elementary School, on April 25, 1954, became the second place of worship for what would soon become Providence Baptist Church. While the above events were evolving, the Mecklenburg Baptist Association offered the aspiring new church a four-acre tract of land located at the corner of Jefferson Drive and Providence Road as the site for its ministry. Shortly thereafter, the new congregation

adopted the name “Providence Baptist Church” as their official name in honor of the popular road that fronted their new property. While the name comes from the community and road, there was a deep feeling that the Almighty Yahweh God had a lot to do with the origin of Providence Baptist Church in 1953-54.

Intense discussions among the new Providence Church members led them to the realization that their four-acre tract of land was too small to fit into their visionary plans for the future. Thus, with a rare demonstration of faith, these families rejected the Providence Road property. The Mecklenburg Baptist Association then offered them the four-acre tract with “trading privileges.” The church sold the Providence Road lot for \$7,500 and purchased an eight-acre tract located at the corner of Hunter Lane and Randolph Road from Mrs. Edna Heeseman and Miss Harriet Sistrunk for \$30,600. This was a truly beautiful tract that gradually sloped from west to east with a wooded portion ideally suited for the new church’s recreational needs. The Mecklenburg Baptist Association provided \$15,600 of the cost, with the remaining \$15,000 being financed with American Trust Bank on signature notes of the church men.

The many months of planning, prayer and anticipation were finally rewarded on Sunday, May 23, 1954, when 88 persons met in the Eastover Elementary School auditorium to be “constituted” into Providence Baptist Church by the Mecklenburg Baptist Association. As a result, 56 persons became initial charter members; however, charter membership privileges were extended through the first Sunday of occupancy of the new fellowship hall, February 13, 1955.

Ed Echerd, Jr., first church moderator and charter member, later wrote regarding this constituting of Providence Baptist Church:

From 1949 until 1969 it was my privilege as Superintendent of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association to have a part in establishing more than a dozen churches. Not one of them was brighter in prospect than Providence nor have any of them fulfilled our expectations as well as Providence.

The Association and a few affiliated churches sought to sponsor missions and churches, especially during the period of the 30,000 Movement. Providence was the first of these to be the recipient of a generous and worthy foundation.

The site was seen at the time to be both strategic and adequate. Moreover, it attracted such a corps of committed church folk that it was often said that Providence was born full-grown. To their credit and to those who joined later, it may now be stated, with a like degree of assurance, that the end is not in sight.

The new church wasted little time or effort in starting its ministry to the community. With assistance from Roland Carter of the Department of Church Architecture of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tennessee, who visited with the Building Survey Committee during the week of March 14, 1954, plans were drawn for a fellowship hall building to be located on the northeast corner of the eight-acre tract, the H. Gordon Weekley Chapel today. Sunday, May 16, was Decision Day and all persons interested in forming Providence Baptist Church were asked to complete an Application for Church Membership Card. The goal was to get at least 100 committed members by Organization Day on Sunday, May 23, at 3:00 pm at the Eastover School. All area Baptist churches, pastors and friends were urged to participate, and they willingly did so. The Mecklenburg Baptist Association tentatively received Providence Baptist as a member on June 22, 1954, with full membership being granted on October 21 at the Association's Annual Meeting at the First Baptist Church. Providence was the 54th Baptist church admitted to the Association.

Another Providence Baptist "first" took place on Sunday night, June 17, 1954. Dr. Frank Moore, at 9:00 pm at Oakhurst Baptist, baptized new members into the fellowship, supervised by the newly elected Baptismal Committee. This was followed on July 11 by the first Lord's Supper with Dr. Moore and the deacons in charge.

On July 26, 1954, at the business meeting held at The Hut, architect and church member Jim Benton presented the plans for the new fellowship building. The plans were approved and bids opened on August 3, with the bid going to Myers & Chapman, Inc. for \$32,528. The contract was signed by the newly elected Church Trustees, Ed Echerd, Jr., H. G. Garrison, Sr. and W. M. Scruggs, Jr. On August 15, construction was underway and visible progress was being made. G. E. Vinroot, of the Building Committee, was the spokesman for the church with the contractor. By September 5, the

foundation had been poured and walls were beginning to rise. Members were encouraged to visit but not during working hours.

Added to the new member roll on October 3, 1954, was Richard Vinroot, the son of G. E. Vinroot. Richard would later become a prominent Charlotte attorney and be elected Mayor of Charlotte for two terms during the 1980s.

Sunday, October 31, 1954, was designated as Founders Day. The “first” anniversary of the church was celebrated with an indoor picnic held at the Sardis Presbyterian Scout Hut. The church provided the drinks with church families bringing the “eats.” Fun was had by all who attended.

On January 24, 1954, Providence participated in the Union Thanksgiving Service held in the Belk Chapel at Queens College. Three other churches, Christ Lutheran, Providence Methodist and Trinity Presbyterian, joined Providence Baptist in the fellowship.

From November 1953 through April 18, 1954, the pulpit was filled by a diverse, talented group of ministers taking turns serving the new church for \$10 per sermon:

Dr. Lawson Allen, President, Gardner-Webb College

Dr. Claude U. Broach, Pastor, St. John’s Baptist

Dr. W. M. Boyce, Sardis Presbyterian Church

Rev. Tom C. Christmas, Chaplain, U. S. Army

Rev. H. L. Ferguson, Pastor, Thomasboro Baptist

Dr. George D. Heaton, Pastor, Myers Park Baptist

Dr. L. B. Huston, Pastor, Providence Church, Atlanta, GA

Rev. Charles O. Milford, Pastor, Park Road Baptist

Dr. Frank R. Moore, Pastor, Oakhurst Baptist

Rev. Ned Taylor, Pastor, Chantilly Baptist

Rev. Harry L. Thomas, Pastor, Calvary Baptist

Rev. Coit R. Troutman, Pastor, Westover Baptist

Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor, First Baptist

Dr. A. B. Wood, Pastor, Midwood Baptist

Rev. J. Clyde Yates, Pastor, Allen Street Baptist

Dr. Frank R. Moore, Pastor of Oakhurst Baptist, served as Providence’s Interim Minister, on loan from Oakhurst, from April 25 through December 26, 1954. He preached at Providence at 9:45 am on Sunday mornings for \$15 per week and returned to his Oakhurst pulpit for the 11:00 am service. Dr. Moore was instrumental in

forming many new churches around the Charlotte area, including Providence, Hickory Grove Baptist, Lake Norman Baptist and Eastern Hills Baptist. He retired in 1981 as Pastor of East Baptist Church but continued to serve his Lord as interim pastor in many churches around the Charlotte area. Dr. Moore was a very active spiritual leader for 48 years. He died on August 6, 2001, and was buried in Sharon Memorial Park in Charlotte. The Moore family has great comfort in knowing that he is now in the arms of the Lord whom he served so faithfully for a lifetime. Dr. Moore's contributions to the new Providence Baptist Church were invaluable. As the December 26, 1954, church bulletin stated:

No group was ever more fortunate than Providence in having a supply pastor to unify its people through the ministry of the Word.

Since the first day of this agreement we have been duly constituted as a church, and received into the Association; almost fifty new members have been added, a building program has been initiated, all phases of church life organized, and a regular pastor called. Throughout this period Dr. Moore has preached Christ, with love, grace, simplicity and humility.

There is now no way in which we can adequately thank him, his wife and his church. But may their joy in the ministries performed equal our gratitude to them for it. We love Frank Moore and thank God for him.

Dr. Frank Moore paid his last known visit to Providence Baptist Church on May 12, 1995, as a participant in the 40th Anniversary Banquet for charter members held in the fellowship hall. He, again, was a recipient of the love and warmth of those who were nurtured during his interim pastorate.

On December 12, 1954, following a Friday night trial sermon preached at St. John's Baptist Church in Charlotte, the Providence congregation called the Rev. H. Gordon Weekley, Jr., as its first Pastor. Rev. Weekley, at the time, was Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Kings Mountain, North Carolina. He was a graduate of the Atlanta, Georgia, Public Schools, Furman University and The Southern Baptist Seminary of Louisville, Kentucky (1948). He and

his first wife, Norma Lou, had four sons (Steve, Dan, David and John) who grew up in the church and shared in its ministry.

The 1954 year closed for Providence with Loyalty Day (pledge commitment to the new budget) on December 12, the December 19 announcement that Rev. H. Gordon Weekley, Jr. had accepted the call as Providence's first pastor and the Christmas Party held at Sardis Presbyterian on December 22.

On Sunday, January 2, 1955, Providence welcomed Gordon Weekley and his family into the church fellowship and to the community at the Eastover School. That Sunday, Weekley delivered the first sermon by the first official pastor, and the sermon title was "The Raison d'être for Providence Baptist Church." New members that day were the Rev. and Mrs. Grady Wilson, members of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Team.

The January 9 church bulletin contained a note of thanks from the Weekley family for the warm welcome and bounty of food bestowed upon them. Weekley's sermon that day laid down the goals for the congregation and for himself. Lofty goals they were but ones that, in time, would create one of the great churches in North Carolina, both in size and spirit, that could influence not only its own members but also the larger community.

Weekley envisioned that Providence Baptist would one day become a church from which other churches would begin. He pictured a church environment so movingly giving and loving that it would become a vehicle for producing lay leaders, missionaries and pastors. The youthful, dynamic congregation bought his visions that day and rose to the challenges he offered as their pastor. Most of what they foresaw on January 9, 1955, eventually transpired. The dreams came true for everyone except Gordon Weekley. As the years passed, it became a tragedy for him and his family.

February 1955 witnessed three special events in the growth of Providence. On February 13, the congregation held its first services in the new small fellowship building. The auditorium held just over 100 persons, and the door behind the podium led to the pastor's office and a few classrooms. It was filled to overflowing, standing room only, but was "home" and no one paid any attention to the folding chairs or gravel parking lot.

On the afternoon of February 13, the Weekleys hosted an Open House Reception in the new pastorium. The Dedication Service for the church building and property took place on February 20 with special guest and speaker M. A. Huggins, Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention. His closing prayer to the standing-room-only crowd was:

Hear thou our prayer, O Lord Our God

Show us Thy mercy and grant us Thy salvation.

We praise Thy Holy Name forever

In Thee our hearts shall rejoice all the days of our life.

Turn Thee again, O Lord Our God,

Turn and be gracious, show Thy mercy unto

Thy servants, Amen.

The congregation believed that growth depended upon letting people in the surrounding area hear about Providence Baptist and its work. Thus, during the week of March 27, 1955, the church sponsored a daily 15-minute devotional program over WIST Radio with Pastor Weekley promoting the church and its ministry.

The fellowship building was built and occupied in February 1955 at a cost of \$35,000, financed through a line of credit from the American Trust Bank of Charlotte. In addition, a pastorium was purchased for Rev. Weekley's use through a \$25,000 loan from First Federal Savings and Loan of Charlotte. A wing was added to the fellowship building during the summer of 1956 at a cost of \$15,000. A generous gift of \$10,000 was given to Providence in 1955 and 1956 by Myers Park Baptist Church to assist with its debt and program needs.

In 1955, the church approved a budget of \$30,000 and gave \$1,300 to missions, a very good beginning for the new church. Pastor Weekley conducted the church's first revival April 3-10 and was ably assisted by Rev. Guy Boggs, a graduate of the Southern Baptist Seminary, whose specialty was sacred music. Rev. Boggs was supported by Minister of Music Martha Iley and the church choir. The revival drew large crowds and provided new energy and inspiration.

As the April 17 church bulletin stated: *The Secret of Growth is:*

G – o

R – ight

O – n

W – orking

Sunday, May 22, 1955, was the First Anniversary Celebration. As the church bulletin noted:

The purchase of so large a tract of land was a mighty big responsibility for so few people. However, they did it in Faith. And now it is debt free. The adoption of a \$30,000 budget for 126 people was unthinkable! But they did it in Faith. We are ahead of our schedule to double our membership in 1955. We will do it in Faith.

Week-after-week proved to be no different. Even Wednesday night prayer meetings drew large crowds. It seemed that something was going on every night at the church. Baptist Training Union was popular. A Royal Ambassadors class was formed. The choir was growing and youth choirs begun. Members liked being at the little church and being with each other. When they were not at church, many of them were getting together in homes for cookouts or games. Acquaintances were becoming friends. Friends were becoming family.

Following that first February service in the fellowship hall, the deacons met in Rev. Weekley's office to discuss expanding the building. More classrooms were needed for the growing church membership. They quickly agreed that a new addition was needed, which was completed and occupied in June 1955.

Each Sunday brought new visitors, and on one Sunday in May, 33 of them became members. It was a sight no one at Providence had ever seen before. As membership grew, Providence, without a baptistry, had to rely upon using the facilities of other local Baptist churches, such as Oakhurst and St. John's.

It was also announced on May 22 that Wendell Sloan had joined the staff as Minister of Promotion for spring and summer. His work would be promotional in nature, assisting the pastor in the vital work of integrating a strong youth program. Sloan, at the time, was working toward a Master's Degree in Religious Education at Southwestern Baptist Seminary.

Another Providence “first” was announced on June 26, 1955. Minister of Promotion Wendell Sloan reported that Providence had completed its first daily Vacation Bible School, with an enrollment of 143 and an average attendance of 114. As the church bulletin stated: *We feel that the overwhelming success of this important event is another evidence of God's presence among us in these important months of our history.*

On July 4, 1955, Gordon Weekley departed for New York and a two-week trip to London to participate in the Golden Jubilee meeting of the World Baptist Alliance. He also preached sermons at Fillebrook Baptist Church, Willsden Green Baptist Church and the Cambridge University Non-Conformist Church. During Weekley's absence, Dr. Frank Moore, Providence's first interim pastor, returned to the pulpit and was heartily welcomed by the church members who fondly remembered his support in the early days.

Gordon Weekley returned to the Providence pulpit on Sunday, August 21, following his trip to the Baptist World Alliance and two-week extended vacation tour of Europe. As the church bulletin stated: *We want the day to be an unusual one for Providence Baptists. For a “one-two punch” we have set a goal of 100 in Training Union and 200 in Sunday School. Let's “knockout” the summer slump with this “one-two punch.”*

Minister of Promotion Wendell Sloan completed his summer of work on August 21. The church bulletin carried the following In Appreciation Statement:

Among the noteworthy contributions to the Providence Baptist Church program has been the work of Wendell Sloan this summer. His ministry to us in Church Administration and in correlating all educational activities was made effective by his dedicated sincerity and abilities in study and experience. As he leaves us, to take to himself a wife and to complete his courses at Southwestern Baptist Seminary, we wish him well!

On September 24, 1955, another Providence “first” took place when Margot Grimes and Glenn Anderson were married. As the announcement stated: *We take special pride in this wedding since it is the first in the history of our church and the first to be held on our church premises. May God bless these two young people as they blend their lives together!*

The year of 1955 for Rev. Weekley and his little church ended with visitations, meetings, plans for another annex to the fellowship hall, preparation of the 1956 budget, planning the Thanksgiving and Christmas programs, and a month-long appearance as guest pastor of a television program called *Vespers*, which aired five nights a week on what was then Charlotte's only television station, WBTV. Weekley's selection so early in his Providence ministry showed the impact that the young pastor was making on the Charlotte community.

Weekley was not alone in his ambition and energy. He was surrounded by talented people, church members, to whom excellence was an everyday word. His days began early and ran late, always on the run. Weekley couldn't slow down if he wanted to, and he didn't want to do so. It was fun being the leader of this vibrant church. So what if he didn't get enough sleep? So what if he felt some pressure? He would thrive on pressure. He was planting the seeds for what would soon become a great church. Unknown to him, he was also sowing the seeds for the near destruction of his own body and soul.

Gordon Weekley began his second year as pastor on January 1, 1956. In the church bulletin, he summarized his first year as follows: *As we look back, we are brought immediately to our knees in inexpressible gratitude for all the Lord's goodness: how heaped-up His blessings have been.....until our cup runneth over. You have been so good to your Pastor and his family.*

On January 4, the church in conference approved its first Organizational Chart which showed diagrammatically the relation of each officer and committee of the church to each other. In addition, the church in conference on January 22 was told that church membership had reached 240 and Sunday School 355. They also approved a committee to select a Minister of Education with a salary up to \$5,000.

On February 1, 1956, the church extended an unanimous call to Wendell Sloan to become Minister of Education. The call, to a large degree, came from the love and respect the Providence members had observed of Wendell's 1955 summer work and the warm personality and commitment that he possessed. They saw in him a true man of God.

Wendell Sloan accepted the church's call on February 2, 1956. An excerpt from his acceptance letter stated:

There is but one regret I have from this wonderful experience of having answered the call to Providence and that is that I have not been able to answer all those who wrote me. It has been an humbling experience and I pray that as we work together – God may all the more be glorified at Providence.

Wendell was installed as Providence's first Minister of Education on Sunday, May 20, 1956, the second anniversary of the church.

In March 1956, Pastor Weekley was elected President of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association. The term was for one year, and it was a credit to Weekley and his young church for the work they were doing in the community.

On Sunday morning, October 7, Gordon Weekley and Providence participated in another "first." The 11:00 am service was broadcast by WSOC Radio each Sunday in October. Also, throughout November 1956, Gordon alternated with Dr. Claude Broach of St. John's Baptist in a quarter-hour Wednesday and Friday evening vesper service broadcast over WBTV. Church members were encouraged to pray for these two media ministries and the opportunities they provided for the church.

As 1956 drew to a close, the main focus for Providence Baptist was the building excitement and anticipation of starting the new proposed House of Worship. Committees were in place, plans being drawn and potential funding ideas discussed.

Membership continued to increase, and the fellowship hall, with its additional wing and adjacent prefabricated annex, could take no more. A sanctuary had to be built, one large enough to hold at least 500 worshippers, a church office and Sunday School classes. True to the optimistic nature of the people and their pastor, this building would only be a step along the way toward a much larger one. It would look and feel like a permanent sanctuary with altar, baptistry and pews, but it was designed so that, in the future, it could be converted into another fellowship hall and a second floor could be added for more classrooms. The final sanctuary would come later.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1956, Providence was blessed to have a variety of talented persons to fill the pulpit:

Dr. Budd Smith, President, Wingate Junior College
 Dr. J. C. Canipe, President, N. C. Baptist Convention
 Rev. Frank Perry, Minister of Education, St. John's Baptist
 Mrs. J. T. McRae, Missionary to Jordan
 Rev. Coit Troutman, Pastor, Falls Creek, Virginia, Baptist

During late 1956 and early 1957, the Finance Committee and deacons, encouraged by Pastor Weekley, instituted a Uniform Budget Plan – all funds given to the church would go into a general budget, rather than to individual projects. In addition, focus was placed upon personal contact and regular visitation of members as a way to maintain steady growth and to raise the funds to meet the ever-growing budget needs, which grew to \$76,000 in 1957.

During the period of January-February 1957, the Building Committee worked with the Southern Baptist Architecture Department in Nashville, Tennessee, to complete plans for the new house of worship. The first set of plans was reviewed on March 18 by the Steering Committee of the Building Committee, which chose Colonial Georgian as the architectural style for the new house of worship. A church conference on June 17, 1957, empowered the Building Committee to sign a contract with the architectural firm of J. Norman Pease and Associates to oversee the plans, letting of contracts and beginning work on the new house of worship – a history-making decision for the future of Providence Baptist.

Sunday, May 19, 1957, was celebrated as the third birthday of Providence. As the church bulletin stated:

It has been a custom among rural churches, for many decades, to gather their people in once a year for a 'homecoming celebration.' Three years ago, Providence Baptist established this tradition to see how it would 'take' with city people. It has been an overwhelming success and if you do not believe it, watch next Sunday.

At the afternoon service, a period of hymn-singing and a message by Dr. Frank Moore were the highlights.

Another "first" for Providence took place on Tuesday, August 20, 1957. It was Providence's first opportunity, as one of the new churches of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association, to be host to the other churches. The session was well-attended and Providence was a very gracious host.

When Pastor Weekley was not in the pulpit in 1957, Providence once again was blessed with a variety of talented speakers:

Dr. Stuart Currie, Professor, Queens College

Rev. Lowell Sodeman, Porter Mem. Baptist, Lexington, KY

Rev. W. T. Baucom, Retired North Carolina Baptist Pastor

Mr. Ernest Kluttz, Jr., President, NC Baptist Brotherhood

Rev. C. O. Milford, Pastor, Park Road Baptist

Dr. M. A. Huggins, State Baptist Executive Secretary

Rev. John Glenn, Youth Director, First Baptist

Rev. Emory Trainham, Associate Pastor, Myers Park Baptist

Mr. W. R. Griggs, State Missions Department, Raleigh

Dr. Budd Smith, President, Wingate Junior College

Rev. John McGee, Foreign Mission Board, Africa Staff

Rev. B. E. Morris, Retired Baptist Pastor

The 1955 budget was \$30,000. In 1956 it grew to \$60,000, and in 1957 it grew to \$76,000, with \$9,120 designated for missions. The Duke house on Hunter Lane adjacent to the church property was purchased for \$19,500 as a temporary educational annex until the new building could be completed. In July, members approved spending \$2,300 to pave the church parking lot which was gravel prior to this time. The debts on the church property and fellowship building were paid off in December 1957 through the faith, prayers and financial stewardship of the members. It was a time of rejoicing for all!

On January 5, 1958, Providence welcomed its second Minister of Music, Phillip Gehring. Mr. Gehring was a Music Professor at Davidson College, with a national reputation as an organist.

The February 9 church bulletin announced that Providence had lost its first charter member to death. Mrs. T. H. Crews had been ill for some time and passed away on February 3, 1958.

In special conference on April 16, the church accepted with regret Wendell Sloan's resignation as Minister of Education, effective May 1, 1958. Wendell had prayerfully accepted the call to the First Baptist Church, Augusta, Georgia, as their Minister of Education. On Sunday, April 20, the congregation called Miss Martha Williams as Interim Minister of Education for the summer of 1958. Miss Williams had served for two years as Church Secretary, prior to resigning to study at Southwestern Baptist Seminary.

On February 15, 1958, the architects presented the revised sanctuary plans to the Building Committee, and on March 9 they were presented to the congregation. The project would cost over \$400,000. After a series of animated meetings, the church agreed to raise the money.

The ground-breaking ceremony took place on May 25, 1958. Al Edwards, co-chair of the Building Committee, thought everyone should participate. Thus, Al found an old plow, painted it gold and attached three long ropes to it. The members took their places in front of the plow and pulled the ropes tight. Pastor Weekley and Al's brother, Bill, each held a plow handle, and at the pastor's signal, the church members pulled, opening a furrow of earth from which the new sanctuary complex would grow.

For Gordon Weekley and his dynamic growing church, 1958 was a benchmark year. Personnel changes had to be made. A new Minister of Education to replace Wendell Sloan had to be found. Martha Iley, the Music Director, resigned from her unpaid job and was replaced by Phillip Gehring. For Gordon Weekley, it was a frantic time, though he thrived on it. His nights were a little more restless, a little more sleepless. In fact, the growing pressure led him to question whether he was really the pastor to lead this dynamic church where it wanted to go.

The growing pressures might have gotten to him more quickly if it had not been for the genuine good nature of the congregation. They were open and good-humored with each other. God was Gordon Weekley's strength, but so were they. The love that he poured out on them was returned in like manner.

During the summer of 1958, Providence began the tradition of having the Sunday evening services outdoors. The pulpit was centered between two beautiful pines God planted for them. Eventually, the Building and Grounds Committee made a real pulpit out of the natural slope, and the congregation enjoyed the coolness and beauty of their outdoor sanctuary.

Membership continued to grow. On April 13, 1958, Providence began having two Sunday morning services to accommodate the growing crowds. Providence was no longer just a neighborhood church. People came from all over Mecklenburg County, drawn by

the energy of the young church and its dynamic pastor who seemed to have a genuine affection for all whom he met.

From appearances, it seemed that everything Gordon Weekley wanted, he got, and everything Providence Baptist wanted to do, it did. However, appearances can be misleading, especially at this time for Weekley. Early in his Providence ministry, Gordon had been introduced to a young Charlotte physician, and a special bond of friendship had developed between them. During lunch one afternoon in August 1958, the physician asked Gordon how things were going. His response was that *things couldn't be better, except that I've been feeling a little jittery lately.*

Following lunch, they walked back to the physician's office where the doctor wrote out two prescriptions for Gordon. The first one, "Miltown," Gordon would take in the morning to relieve his jitteriness. The second, "Doriden," Gordon would take about a half-hour before bedtime to help him sleep better. The young physician assured Gordon that the drugs were safe and nonaddictive. However, a pharmacist today would disagree. Doriden, generic name "glutethimide," is a sedative-hypnotic that was used as a sleeping pill and also prescribed by some physicians for daytime use to relieve anxiety. Though considered safe, some of its possible side effects include slurred speech and a staggering gait, somewhat like symptoms of alcohol intoxication.

Late that night filled with anxiety about his sermon, hospital visitation and other pressing issues, Gordon took a Doriden. Within minutes, he felt better than he had for some time. He was filled with peace and happiness, thanks to a little pill named Doriden. He slept soundly that night and awoke refreshed and ready for work. Just to be sure, he took a Miltown to ward off any potential jitteriness.

It didn't work. As the days turned into weeks, unrelenting pressures led him to take more and more of the two drugs. However, they didn't seem to impair his work. He strove to be a better pastor and caretaker for his church flock. A highlight was his participation in Billy Graham's 1958 Charlotte Crusade in which he and his physician friend were able to share some special moments.

Providence set a budget goal of \$102,000 for 1959. On November 24, the Finance Committee announced that pledges had

exceeded the goal and said: *Our grateful thanks to a great congregation.Many sacrificial acts are involved in these figures. May God bless you in your stewardship activities!*

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1958, Providence again was blessed to have a variety of talented persons to fill the pulpit:

Dr. Joe Burton, Editor, *Home Life Magazine*

Dr. E. V. Hudson, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist, Cramerton

Rev. Harry Gamble, Pastor, Calvary Baptist, Roanoke, VA

Dr. Lewis Martin, Secretary, Home Mission Board

Rev. B. E. Morris, Retired Baptist Pastor

Dr. C. L. Smith, Medical Missionary

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

In a special called conference on December 28, 1958, the church called Oscar Whitescarver to be its new Minister of Education. He accepted the call, and the church welcomed the Whitescarvers to Providence on January 4, 1959. As the church bulletin stated: *We will look forward to Brother Whitescarver's Ministry of Education and his joint administrative duties with the pastor and other church officers.* Joining Mr. Whitescarver were wife Pat and daughters Sarah and Carolyn.

Providence Baptist Church's membership continued to grow rapidly during the spring of 1959 and so did Gordon Weekley's need for more and more Miltown and Doriden. He stopped eating and began to lose weight. Church members attributed this to overwork and hoped that he would slow down and eat more.

May 17, 1959, was a day of celebration for the congregation. They moved into the beautiful new sanctuary and its adjacent Sunday School classrooms. As Gordon Weekley surveyed the congregation during the sermon that morning, he knew this new building, like the fellowship hall before it, would not hold the growing church for long.

Membership during the first half of 1959 grew rapidly. Sunday School membership rose nearly 50% from 1958. The 1959 budget increased to \$102,000. Providence Baptist had come a long way since 1953 and so had Gordon Weekley. His reputation had spread throughout the Charlotte region, as well as through the Baptist State Convention. In the fall of 1959, he received an invitation through Dr. Grady Wilson, a member of Billy Graham's Crusade Team, to

accompany the team on its tour of Africa in 1960. For Gordon Weekley it was a dream come true. The idea of helping spread the Gospel Message in Africa brought out the missionary zeal in him.

At this point, a streak of reality hit Gordon Weekley. He couldn't afford it and neither could Providence Baptist Church, with a new sanctuary and a debt exceeding \$450,000. Reluctantly, he told Grady Wilson, *Thank you, but no!* Church members Tom Pfaff and Arthur Ross decided that Gordon Weekley should go and paid his way for several weeks. However, Gordon wasn't going without an abundant supply of his Miltown and Doriden pills. He made an appointment with his young physician friend to get the required shots for the trip and extra prescriptions for the rest and energy he would need, and he got them without a question being asked. Amazingly, Weekley, as he became more dependent upon his drug habit, never seemed to fail in his efforts to be a true shepherd of his congregation.

From January 25-29, 1958, Dr. William Harrison Williams, Pastor Emeritus of Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church, taught the Gospel of Mark and brought new insights into the life of Christ for Providence members. May 10-17 was the annual church revival led by Dr. John Barry, President of Coker College. Providence member Arthur Smith helped plan and conduct the revival.

The April 26 church bulletin carried the following announcement:

Next Sunday will be the last in the Fellowship Building. Beginning May 10, we will be in the new building with all of the expanded facilities – and to think – just last May 15, “Ground-breaking” was featured in the Pastorgram. Truly God has been with us this past year and we are looking forward to a glorious month of May.

May 3, 1958, was the last 8:40 am worship service. Sunday, May 10, was the first 11:00 am service in the new sanctuary – two Sunday morning services were no longer needed.

Sunday, May 24, 1958, was Dedication Day for the new sanctuary and Sunday School facilities, and the highlight of this service was the first baptismal service held at Providence. All former Providence members that could be located were invited to the dedication service.

The annual Thanksgiving Community Worship Service on November 26 was held at Providence for the first time. The sermon was preached by Rev. W. Douglas Corriher, Pastor of Providence Methodist Church.

The year 1959 can be summed up by Deacon Chair Harry Bacon's appeal to the congregation in late November:

The unusually rapid growth of our church during the few years since its beginning, should convince anyone that God has a great purpose for us here at Providence.

Because this church has come to its present estate as an institution in this community only through the magnificent stewardship of its people during these five years, we have perhaps our greatest challenge to stewardship just ahead.

Along with the great blessings we are enjoying, we must accept the responsibility of continuing and enlarging the influence of our church in this community.

We feel that our 1960 budget of \$118,000 is well-planned, reasonable and worthy of our wholehearted support.

Deacon Chair Bacon's faith that the congregation would rise to the challenge was accurate. They met and surpassed it.

During Pastor Weekley's 1959 absences, Providence again was blessed to have a variety of talented persons to fill the pulpit:

Dr. John Barry, President, Coker College

Mr. Ed Darling, Church Member and Secretary of Billy Graham Team Office

Mr. Bill Cody, Foreign Missions Board, Richmond, VA

Rev. Tom Funderburk, Associate Pastor, Pritchard Memorial

Dr. Herman Ihley, Director, NC Baptist Convention Sunday School Department

Rev. Judson Lennon, Missionary to Thailand

Rev. W. C. Link, Jr., Pastor, Second Baptist, Liberty, MO

Rev. Larry Love, Retired Baptist Minister

Rev. W. J. Stephenson, Pastor, First Baptist, Salisbury

Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor, First Baptist, Charlotte

Dr. Wm. H. Williams, Pastor Emeritus, Pritchard Memorial

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member



Chapter 2

The 1960s

In 1960, Charlotte's population exceeded 200,000 persons. It was the "Queen City" of the Carolinas, the largest, fastest growing urban center of both states. The 1960s witnessed the consolidation of the city and county school systems and the emergence of Central Piedmont Community College and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte into major institutions of higher education. The decade was one of conflict, tension and change spearheaded by the Civil Rights Movement in which Charlotte and North Carolina played major roles. The 1960 and 1964 Civil Rights Acts provided for desegregation of all public facilities across the nation. The Civil Rights Movement was triggered by the first sit-in lunch counter demonstration that took place in Greensboro on February 1, 1960, and in Charlotte on February 9. These acts and movement were not popular in Charlotte, but peaceful change did take place.

By 1960, Charlotte was exploding in new subdivisions and clearing more of its inner city for commercial and industrial uses. There was a big movement to refurbish the inner city and draw people back from the suburbs. South Tryon Street was becoming a financial strip – Little Wall Street – and also a center of commerce and transportation, rather than manufacturing. The Chamber of Commerce began referring to Charlotte as the "Spearhead of the New South" or a good place to make money.

In 1968, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education was sued in what became known as the Swann Decision. In 1969, Federal Judge James B. McMillan ordered the School Board to employ *any and all known ways of desegregation, including busing of students*. Judge McMillan's decision was later upheld by the United States Supreme Court. School busing was called by many to be *the*

country's most volatile domestic political issue. The school system was not declared to be "compliant unified" until 2001.

The 1960s was a time of transition from a rural-agrarian to an urban-industrial society. It was the era of LBJ's Great Society Program, following the assassination of JFK and his New Frontier Program. The 1960s witnessed our entrance into and growing participation in the Vietnam War, as well as the frenzied American-Soviet Cold War standoff. It was the beginning of the "race" into outer space, with the ultimate goal of placing a man on the moon.

For Providence Baptist Church, the 1960s would also be a decade of change, growth and tensions that would lead to Gordon Weekley's resignation as pastor in 1967 due to drug addiction. However, 1960 began on a very positive note with Gordon's decision to participate in Billy Graham's Africa Crusade (February 15-March 26). On February 14, he departed on his trip to Europe, East Africa, West Africa and the Holy Land. Gordon's companion and best friend on the trip was Dr. Harold Miller, his former Greek Professor at Furman University. Dr. Miller was on sabbatical and joined the Crusade along with Gordon.

The trip was just what Gordon Weekley needed, and he enjoyed himself. It was a chance to serve God as part of one of the great evangelical crusades in history, and it also gave him the opportunity to satisfy his continuing curiosity about the world and its people. However, as the days passed, Harold Miller began to notice changes in Gordon's bedtime demeanor. He seemed drowsier than a man ought to be and less lucid. One night Miller said, *You know you're out of it every night, don't you?*

Harold Miller didn't know Gordon was addicted, and Gordon didn't know he was addicted. There in an African hotel room, Miller had passed a message, a warning, but Gordon Weekley had not received it. It was a missed opportunity for Gordon. Here was a friend he loved and respected most in the world, a friend for whom Gordon would lay down his life. If Gordon were going to listen to anyone, he would be the man. Regrettably, he missed the message that Harold Miller didn't really know he was delivering.

Had Gordon Weekley acknowledged his addiction, what happened a few days later might not have happened, because it made matters much worse. It began when Gordon learned that Grady

Wilson had planned a wild-game hunt for him. Gordon knew on the long drive to the hunt site that he would have to share in the driving, which meant that he could not take his Doriden sleep pill. In a casual conversation with a medical missionary friend, prior to beginning the trip, Gordon voiced his concern about falling asleep.

The missionary said, *Don't worry about it; I've got a capsule that will keep you awake.* Gordon thanked him and put it in his pocket. To Gordon it was simply a medication that would keep him from falling asleep at the wheel. It was Dexamyl. As Gordon would later learn, Dexamyl was a popular time-release diet pill that, while suppressing appetite, also gave the user a great rush of energy that manifested itself in excitability and talkativeness. Dexedrine was the main ingredient, but the capsule also contained a barbiturate intended to offset the jumpy side effects. Gordon did not know this, and if he had, he wouldn't have given it a second thought. All that occupied his mind was his big game hunt in Africa.

Halfway to their destination, Gordon began to feel sleepy. He took the green and white capsule from his pocket and swallowed it with some water. In 15 minutes, Gordon was feeling a euphoria much like he felt with Doriden, but with Doriden he would get sleepy. Now, he was incredibly alert, filled with energy. At this time of night, his companions were subdued and Gordon couldn't understand why. This was Africa!

His friends finally persuaded him to rest until sunrise. They did not know about the Dexamyl and, except for Gordon's unusual alertness, did not notice anything different about him. The hunt was a success; Gordon killed an impala.

The following evening, back with the Crusade Team, Gordon looked up from his dinner plate and into the eyes of a concerned Billy Graham. *Gordon, are you feeling all right?* he asked. *You haven't touched your food. I'm fine, Billy. Just a little tired from the hunt, I guess.*

While Gordon Weekley was participating in the Africa Crusade with the Billy Graham Crusade Team, Providence Baptist continued to grow and minister under the able Deacon Board and Minister of Education Oscar S. Whitescarver. Pulpit guests were:

Mr. Don Burns, Regional Secretary and Translator for Wycliffe Bible Translators

Dr. Douglas M. Branch, Executive Secretary, North Carolina Baptist State Convention

Dr. Leo Eddleman, President, New Orleans Baptist Seminary

Dr. Connell Goerner, Secretary, Foreign Missions Board

Rev. R. M. Hagler, Retired Baptist Minister

Rev. Frank Koger, Seminary Extension Department, Southern Baptist Seminary

Mr. Arthur Smith, Church Member and Musician

Dr. Harold W. Tribble, President, Wake Forest College

Mr. Mike Whelchel, Ministerial Student, Bel Haven College, Jackson, Mississippi

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

Gordon Weekley returned to Providence refreshed and filled with a zeal to get back to the demands of a growing church, budgets, meetings filled with building plans, membership goals and visitation plans. He also returned with a growing fondness for Dexamyl.

Shortly after his return from Africa, Gordon received a call from Frank Caldwell, Executive Director of the Charlotte Rescue Mission, requesting that he come preach to the men. Gordon had spoken several times at the Rescue Mission, a center city refuge for wayfarers, mostly alcoholics. Gordon preached that night with passion, reaching out with his heart and his intellect, hoping to reach a few of these broken and beaten men. A few responded, and he drove home pleased with his efforts. He also drove home relieved that he would not have to go there again for some time. Little did Gordon Weekley know what a central and meaningful role the Rescue Mission would play in later years.

Gordon Weekley continued to have his Wednesday lunches with his physician friend. At one of these lunches, Weekley told his friend about his Dexamyl experience in Africa and how it made him feel more energetic during the day. Getting a prescription from the physician was no problem. Now he was set, energy tinged with euphoria in the days, drowsiness tinged with euphoria in the evening. The circle was complete. There were no gaps, no escape holes to crawl through. Gordon Weekley was on his way to destruction.

To many members of Providence Baptist Church, Gordon's trip to Africa seemed to have given him a renewed energy, an even

greater enthusiasm than before. He never seemed tired, and his speech and body language were more animated than ever. If anyone thought there might be something wrong, they didn't talk about it.

The church growth continued, and Gordon's reputation grew along with it, not just with his public but with his peers. In 1960, he was elected President of the North Carolina Baptist Pastors' Conference in Asheville. It was a high point in his life, but then, at this stage of the game, he was high all the time.

The first church member to openly question Gordon Weekley's health was Martha Lowrance who was not a doctor but knew trouble when she saw it. One Sunday morning after church, she quietly waited for the congregation to say goodbye to the pastor and leave. *Gordon, are you okay? Sure, I'm okay*, he said, surprised. *What makes you think I'm not?*

Your sermon. You delivered it so fast I had trouble keeping up. In fact, you've been doing everything at super speed lately. It's almost like you have a case of hyperactivity. Maybe you need to slow down some. This conversation with Martha Lowrance led Gordon to ponder whether his behavior was the result of the drugs or hard work or both.

Gordon did not have to wait long to find out, because his doctor friend called a few days later and informed him that he had been taking too much Doriden and Dexamyl. The doctor insisted that Gordon check into Presbyterian Hospital for drug abuse observation and counseling. To prevent confusion and keep the real reason for his hospitalization from the congregation, the doctor recommended that his diagnosis be anorexia. Anorexia is a disorder related to weight loss and lack of desire for food which is often attributed to overwork and stress. No mention would be made that he was dependent on Dexamyl and Doriden. He went through four days of agonizing withdrawal. The next Sunday he was back in the pulpit, warmly welcomed by the congregation and encouraged to slow down and eat more. For several weeks he stayed away from the medications and gained 10 pounds.

After about a month, he could stand it no longer, found a new doctor to prescribe Dexamyl and Doriden and secretly began overusing the drugs. He knew now that he had to spread himself out

to avoid suspicion. Thus, he began a systematic campaign of using many doctors and pharmacies to feed his addiction.

The 1960 church revival was held May 1-8 with guest evangelist Dr. Vance Havner, the "Boy Preacher," who began his evangelistic career at the age of 10. Dr. Havner was a very popular national speaker and drew many nonchurch members to the evening services. Iner and Emily Basinger, specialists in evangelistic music, directed the revival special music.

The 6th Anniversary Church Homecoming was held on May 15. The homecoming highlight was a church-wide picnic, and many former members returned for the festivities.

Another Providence "first" began on August 31, 1960, with the opening of a five-year-old Kindergarten Program. Providence called Miss Theatus McLean, a native North Carolinian and recent graduate of the New Orleans Baptist Seminary, to be the Director and Lead Teacher of the kindergarten. She was ably assisted by church member Mrs. Leslie J. Horton as Assistant Teacher. The kindergarten was open to both church and nonchurch members for a nominal monthly fee.

The annual Union Thanksgiving Service was held at Trinity Presbyterian Church on November 24. Pastor Weekley and Minister of Music Doris Gibson were both active participants in the service.

The year of 1960 was brought to a close with the approval of a 1961 church budget of \$133,000, an increase from the 1960 budget of \$115,000. The year had seen continued growth and development for Providence Baptist Church.

Nineteen-sixty-one was designated as the Year of Missions with 20% of the budget going to missions. The campaign began in January with Dr. Catherine Walker, a missionary to Indonesia, as the keynote speaker. A key part of the missions focus was *Televangelism*, a weekly Baptist program shown on WSOC-TV each Sunday morning at 9:00 am. Pastor Weekley was deeply involved in the production and presentation of this program.

A spring 1961 highlight was the April 7 concert performed by the Wheaton College Choir. Laura Kissiah, daughter of the Kissiah church family, sang in the choir.

The annual church revival was held April 30-May 5 with Dr. Charles Howard, Dean of Campbell College, as the revival

evangelist. Hal Shoemaker, Music Director at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church, was the revival song leader, one of his many visits to Providence.

The 7th Providence Homecoming was held on May 21 following the worship service. At the homecoming, the following seven-year facts were given:

1. \$50,000 was given to the Cooperative Program.
2. \$80,000 was given to all mission causes.
3. \$540,000 was given for all causes.
4. 823 new church members.
5. 150 persons were baptized.
6. Third unit of building program was completed.
7. Many other glorious victories for Jesus Christ.

Two new staff members were called in 1961. Miss Juanita Swindler, a student at Southeastern Baptist Seminary, was to serve as Summer Youth Director. Miss Kathleen Nevels was called as Kindergarten-Youth Worker to replace Miss Theatus McLean.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1961, the following guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit:

Mr. Ed Darling, Public Relations Dir., Christian Enterprise
 Mr. Frank Garrison, Executive Secy, Home Mission Board
 Dr. Jacob Gartenhaus, Dir., Home Mission Board to Israel
 Rev. O. J. Hagler, Retired Baptist Minister
 Rev. J. M. Glenn, Pastor, First Baptist, Raeford
 Dr. Frank Laubach, Anti-Communist Speaker
 Rev. Andrew Losier, Missionary to East Africa
 Rev. John McGee, Missionary to Nigeria
 Rev. Rommie Pierce, Pastor, Plaza Baptist Church
 Dr. Budd Smith, President, Wingate College
 Dr. Catherine Walker, Missionary to Indonesia
 Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist, Charlotte
 Dr. Wm. H. Williams, Pastor Emeritus, Pritchard Memorial

The 1962 Providence Baptist theme was "A Year for Church Extension." It began on January 7 with the church celebrating Gordon Weekley's seventh anniversary as pastor and Oscar Whitescarver's third anniversary as Minister of Education.

Gordon Weekley was invited by Dr. Grady Wilson to participate in the Billy Graham Venezuela Crusade January 15-27, 1962.

Initially, his participation was for rest and relaxation. However, he became very active in preaching in churches and missions, as well as assisting in the evening Crusade services. Regrettably, he also carried his addiction to Dexamyl and Doriden with him. He discovered in a Maracaibo Pharmacy that he could buy Doriden over-the-counter without a prescription. As a result, he bought a large quantity and smuggled it back into the United States hidden on his person.

In January, Andrew J. Borders was named chairman of the Annual Revival Committee. The revival was April 22-29 with Dr. Ralph Herring as guest minister and Hal Shoemaker as song leader.

February was a busy month, highlighted by a Valentine Reception for 60 new church members added since September 1961. In addition, Minister of Music Doris Gibson scheduled Saturday instrumental music classes for interested adults. They were taught by Cellist Oliver Godla, Instrumental Music Director for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The object for the long-run was the creation of a Providence Baptist Orchestra.

The 1962 theme of "extension" began in earnest on March 18 when nearly 200 Providence members participated in a Church Community Survey to identify and reach the unchurched. The survey was a big success and brought several new members into Providence.

April began with a church-wide adult social entitled "ShowBoat Cruise." A good time was had by all who participated. This was followed by a series of cottage prayer meetings to prepare members for the April 22-29 annual revival. The guest minister was Dr. Ralph Herring, former Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem. Dr. Herring was assisted by Hal Shoemaker, Minister of Music at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church.

In business conference on April 30, the church deeded the parsonage on Addison Drive to the Weekleys, along with a monthly housing allowance. Weekley later bought 16 acres of land on Courtney Lane and used the parsonage as a down payment.

On May 11, 1962, a called meeting was held for parents of teens, brought about by disturbing accounts of teens getting into trouble. The keynote speaker was Rev. Boyce Brooks, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Boone, who had earned a regional reputation for working with troubled teens.

Homecoming was on May 20, and a church-wide picnic was held in the grove behind the Fellowship Building. Many former church members and visitors attended and enjoyed the festivities.

On June 11, Pastor Weekley announced the opening of a church library in the Fellowship Building. Mrs. Tom Privette and Mrs. C. C. Helms were the acting librarians.

In June, the Kenneth Lail family donated a Knabe baby grand piano for the sanctuary and an Everett piano for the fellowship hall auditorium. On June 25, during the Billy Graham Chicago Crusade, George Beverly Shea sang "The Shadow of the Cross," written by church member Arthur Smith as a part of his new album, "The Finger of God."

On July 15, 1962, Providence opened a "new medium" of ministry to the community. Each fifth Sunday of the month, the 11:00 am worship service was taped and replayed at 7:00 pm over WIST Radio.

In August 1962, under the direction of Arthur Ross, several Providence members began conducting services at the Presbyterian Hospital Chapel. Special music was performed by the Albro sisters.

In early September, Doris Gibson, Minister of Music for four years, resigned effective September 30, for personal and health reasons. A special reception was held in her honor on September 30. On September 24 in business conference, the church called Alice and Richard Ungerbuehler to serve as Interim Ministers of Music. At the same business conference, the church approved letting Pastor Weekley accept an invitation from the Japan Baptist Convention and the Foreign Mission Board to be one of 150 preachers of the Southern Baptist Convention to take part in a 1963 spring preaching mission in Japan.

From October 16-18, 1962, Martha Williams, a former staff member and then Education Director of Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro, returned to teach leadership classes.

The Ford Philpot City-Wide Revival was held October 21-November 18 at the Park Center Auditorium. Providence members were very active through attendance and assisting the ministry team.

On December 10, 1962, Kathleen Nevels, Kindergarten-Youth Director since August 1961, resigned effective December 22 for personal and religious reasons. She was seeking to be assigned as a missionary to Brazil.

The year closed with two Christmas music specials. On December 16, the combined church choirs sang "The Christmas Story in Song," directed by Richard Ungerbuehler. On December 23, there was a Candlelight Service with choral participation.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1961, the following guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Boyce Brooks, Pastor, First Baptist, Boone

Rev. W. M. Gilliland, Missionary to Nigeria

Rev. Hilliard Griffin, World Literacy Staff

Mr. Herman Kissiah, Jr., Dean, Wheaton College

Mr. R. G. LeTourneau, Christian Lay Leader

Rev. Clyde Luther, Retired Baptist Minister

Rev. John McGee, Missionary to Nigeria

Dr. A. Craig Phillips, Supt., Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist, Charlotte

Mr. Ralph West, Missionary to Nigeria

Rev. David Wooten, Pastor, Stough Mem. Baptist, Pineville

The 1963 Providence church year began in January with Pastor Weekley preaching an evening series on the deeper meaning of the Lord's Prayer. This was followed by the annual Bible Study Course entitled "Studies in Matthew" with guest teacher Rev. J. C. Jones, Pastor of Green Memorial Baptist Church.

Church membership in January 1963 was 773. Sunday School enrollment was 937, with an average attendance of 666. Training Union enrollment was 282, with an average attendance of 185. All three enrollment and attendance figures showed steady growth over 1962 figures.

On Sunday night, January 6, the congregation surprised the Weekley family with a "This Is Your Life" program emceed by Sonny Smith. As Pastor Weekley said in the next *Pastorgram*: *Words completely fail me as I try to do justice to my feelings toward our congregation regarding the fantastically generous tribute paid to us. It was a fitting tribute to celebrate Weekley's eighth anniversary as pastor.*

Minister of Education Oscar Whitescarver announced in late January that the Deacon Board had approved a comprehensive church organizational plan. The plan and diagram showed the flow of power from the congregation, the Deacon Board, Pastor and committees to the individual church member. It is believed that this was the first organizational plan ever to be approved by the church.

During the month of February, Providence was involved in discussing whether to participate in a pilot project of the Baptist Sunday School Board and Church Development Department of the North Carolina Baptist Convention. It would be a 10-month project to study the potential growth of the area surrounding Providence and prepare an analysis of the church. This would be followed by preparing objectives for every area of the church ministry and developing necessary follow-through agendas to carry out the plans.

In a Congregational Open Meeting on February 17, the church discussed the project and, on February 24, voted not to participate. It was generally felt that Providence would be better prepared to undertake this project at a later date.

The highlight event during March 1963 was Pastor Weekley's participation in the Japan New Life Movement. He left Charlotte on March 17, leaving the following message for the church: *I thank you once more for allowing me this fabulous opportunity. I shall carry you in my prayers during these days. I frequently beg your prayer support as I go to the most unusual task which has been assigned to me in Tokyo.*

In addition to his participation in the Tokyo Crusade, Weekley would make stops in Hong Kong, New Delhi and Calcutta. In essence, it would become an around-the-world trip for Weekley, preaching and seeing missionary friends along the way. No one, especially Gordon Weekley when he departed Charlotte on March 17, could imagine that he would not return to the Providence pulpit until June 23, 1963.

For Gordon Weekley, this wonderful trip turned into a nightmare. He was filled with anxiety and depression to the point that he was barely able to function. Weekley carried no Dexamyl and Doriden but stockpiled them along the way. Unable to sleep, a missionary doctor gave him a prescription for Placidyl. Due to growing anxiety and depression, he cut the trip short and returned to Charlotte

overdosed on Placidyl. To keep the church leaders and congregation from discovering his addiction, his family drove him to his parents' home in Atlanta.

He was confined for a month at Peachtree Hospital in Atlanta for dissociation reaction and treated with electroshock. To prevent the congregation from discovering the real problem, the diagnosis sent back to Charlotte was that he was being treated for nervous exhaustion. Most who heard it believed it. The treatments relieved his anxiety but not his appetite for the drugs.

While the above events were transpiring, the Weekley's new home on Courtney Lane was nearing completion, and they moved into it during the summer of 1963. In the meantime, Gordon Weekley continued his drug addiction denial while he tried to stay clean, at least until his hospital confinement stay succumbed to other developing events.

On March 18, 1963, Amos Bumgardner, one of the "prime movers" in the Providence Baptist story, was elected again to serve on the Deacon Board. Dr. Bumgardner was one of North Carolina's leading orthodontists.

During April 1963, the two main highlights were the Lu Wow Musical Banquet for the church youth and the Easter cantata, "The Messiah," performed by the Sanctuary Choir. Both of these productions were carried out under the special talents of Richard Ungerbuehler, Minister of Music, and Oscar Whitescarver, Minister of Education.

During May 1963, Providence helped celebrate Girls' Auxiliary 50th Anniversary. A key part of this celebration was GA Focus Week, ending with the Mother-Daughter Banquet on May 17.

The Vacation Bible School Principal for 1963 was Mrs. D. H. Caldwell. The main task before Mrs. Caldwell and her committee was securing 100 volunteers to carry out the necessary tasks. The VBS enrollment was 317, with an average attendance of about 250.—a very successful school session.

Bob Redwine was called to be the Summer Minister of Youth. He was a Wake Forest graduate, plus having completed three years toward a B. D. Degree at Southeastern Baptist Seminary. Bob was a native of Charlotte, grew up in the First Baptist Church and also had positive experience in church work prior to joining Providence.

Records show that he was active and made youth activities fun for the church youth.

Gordon Weekley returned to Providence on Sunday, June 16, 1963, to preside at both services and introduce the special guest speakers who were personal missionary friends. Dr. Martha Gilliland, medical missionary to Africa, spoke at the morning worship service, and Rev. W. M. Gilliland, missionary to Africa, spoke at the vesper hour. Pastor Weekley preached his first sermon, following the sick leave, on Sunday, June 23, and was warmly welcomed back by the congregation.

In July 1963, the U. S. Postal System began the Zip Code System designed to speed up delivery of the mail. The Providence Zip Code of 28211 has never changed since its inception in 1963.

Beginning July 21, 1963, Pastor Weekley introduced the 30-second Golden Period to the morning and evening worship services. The object of the 30-second silent period before each worship service, as he explained it, was to *seal in the spiritual and separate the gains of the worship hour with a space of prayer from the chatter of conversation.*

Providence always had a steady stream of visitors during the 1960s, due in part to an active Visitation Committee headed by Mrs. Jack Little, Shirley Stancil and the Sunday School classes. The church visitation slogan was: *If every Sunday School member would make one call a year, the whole complexion of our church life would change.*

For Providence youth, a fall highlight was the week of retreat held at Wildacres near Little Switzerland. The total cost for a week of fun and study was \$13.

Due to Pastor Weekley's absence for health reasons, the annual Homecoming with dinner-on-the-grounds was delayed from May to September 8, 1963. Changing the date did not deter nearly 400 members and guests from having a fun-filled session in the grove behind the church.

September 1963 brought a new church year, three new Adult Sunday School Departments, plans for new Sunday School meeting space and GA Coronation Pageant. The church theme for the new year was "People First." Sunday School Superintendent Jack Garrett interpreted it as "Teach the People—Reach the People." The

Training Union interpreted it as "Involve the People." Oscar Whitescarver, Minister of Education, interpreted it as a principle to follow, namely: "When there is a decision to make, make it to meet the needs of people, not the needs of an organization."

In October, Dr. Amos Bumgardner was named chair of a committee to study the needs for a new church building. Oscar Whitescarver, Minister of Education, announced the beginning of a new Sunday School Department for married young people. On October 6, an Appreciation Service celebrated the first anniversary of the Ungerbuehlers as Providence's Ministers of Music.

A church-wide Adult Fellowship Banquet was held on Friday, October 25. The guest speaker was a Providence community neighbor, Charlie Cullen, who had earned a national reputation as a humorist and after-dinner speaker. It was quite an evening of fun and fellowship for those who attended.

The Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 28, 1963, at the Cotswold East Mall. Providence provided the music for the service with the combined adult and youth choirs, directed by the Ungerbuehlers and Martha Iley. The sermon was delivered by Rev. H. Louis Patrick, Pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church.

December was highlighted by the Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for World Missions with an offering goal of \$2,314.46. On Sunday evening, December 15, the combined church choirs presented a carol cantata entitled "This Is Noel," directed by Richard Ungerbuehler. This was followed on Sunday evening, December 22, with the annual Candlelight Service and music cantata, "Lo, A Star," directed by Richard Ungerbuehler.

The final service of 1963 was a Service of Ordination for Theophilus Patnaik, the first person to be ordained into the ministry by Providence Baptist Church. The Ordination Sermon was preached by Evangelist Dr. Leighton Ford.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1963, the following guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit:

Mr. Cliff Acuff, Baptist Lay Speaker

Dr. Robert Dyer, Prof., Religious Ed., Wake Forest College

Dr. Ben Fisher, Executive Secretary, Christian Education,
North Carolina Baptist Convention

Dr. Martha Gilliland, Medical Missionary to Nigeria

Rev. W. M. Gilliland, Missionary to Nigeria

Lt. Gen. William K. Harrison, U. S. Army Retired

Dr. Stewart A. Newman, Professor of Religion, Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Wake Forest

Dr. Leta White, Medical Missionary to Africa

Dr. Wm. H. Williams, Pastor Emeritus, Pritchard Memorial

Providence began 1964 by celebrating Gordon Weekley's ninth anniversary as pastor. As the *Pastorgram* stated: *We thank our Lord and Savior for our preacher-pastor; as the pace-setter for this congregation and as the one to whom we look for help in interpreting a way of life through the maze, confusion, speed and carelessness of the life around us.*

The year began with preparations to participate in the annual Central Leadership School sponsored by the Mecklenburg Baptist Association at Pritchard Memorial. The school provided intensive training for most volunteer church workers and was promoted as a *Wonderful Opportunity for Christians to Grow Spiritually.*

The total church membership enrollment was 899, compared to 773 in January 1963. Sunday School enrollment was 1,036 with an average Sunday attendance of 600. Training Union enrollment was 350 with an average attendance of 187. As the figures show, Providence was growing steadily with the need for new facilities becoming quite evident. The big question, as posed to the congregation in January by Gordon Weekley, was: *Is our spiritual growth commensurate with our material growth?*

On February 3, the Men's Brotherhood had a Special Ladies Night Program with guest speaker WBT Radio Personality Ty Boyd. This was followed on February 14 by an Adult Valentine Party which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

By 1964, the Men's Brotherhood had become nearly as active as the WMU. In February using the theme, "Soul-Winning: Opening New Doors to Evangelism," the Evangelistic Committee of the Brotherhood called on the men of the church to visit in the name of the Lord and Providence Baptist Church. Church enrollment statistics show the visitation program paid dividends.

In conference on February 24, 1964, the church extended a call to Richard Ungerbuehler to become the full-time Minister of Music and Youth, effective April 1. He and his wife, Alice, had served as

Interim Ministers of Music since October 1962. As the February 25 *Pastorgram* stated: *It is all but astounding that Providence Baptist Church has arrived at the three-minister staff status (Weekley, Whitescarver and Ungerbuehler) in less than a decade of existence as a church.*

March 1964 brought the annual WMU Week of Prayer for Home Missions with an offering goal of \$718. The program agenda included the following guest speakers: Miss Anita Stroud, Dr. David Wilkerson, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Burnett and Robert Gregg. It was a week of great spiritual significance for Providence.

The race issue was very hotly debated in Charlotte and throughout the nation in 1964. In an effort to place the issue in a spiritual context, Pastor Weekley urged the Providence congregation to participate in a county-wide rally, a joint venture of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association and three Negro Associations at Ovens Auditorium on March 15. The guest speaker was Dr. Benjamin Mays (a Negro), President of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Mays was one of the greatest preachers, regardless of race or color, of his generation.

On March 13, the Providence youth were invited to Ralph Smith's Redwood House for a "Hootenanny," consisting of folk music, singing and sitting before the big fireplace. This was the big annual affair for the youth, instead of a sweetheart banquet.

Sunday, March 23, was Palm Sunday at Providence. Minister of Music Richard Ungerbuehler led the Sanctuary Choir in a special music program related through Scripture and accompaniment by a brass quartet, "The Easter Story." The music began with Christ's entry into Jerusalem and ended with His death and resurrection. It was a much different and highly moving spiritually uplifting Sunday morning worship experience.

Due to the Easter season and growing church membership, Sunday, March 30, saw two morning worship services. Church membership had passed 1,100; however, the focus of the day was a renewed captivation of the Easter message in all its glory and depth. It would not be until September 1964 that a regular schedule of two Sunday morning worship services would begin.

On April 7, the Men's Brotherhood held a Face-To-Face meeting with the RA basketball team as special guests. The guest speaker was

Charlie Jones, who spoke on “Apollo,” taking a trip to the moon. This was followed on April 18 by the one-day youth retreat at Al Edwards’ river house. The fellowship program and recreation were presented by a special team of students from Wake Forest College.

During April 1964, the three church ministers and lay leaders held a series of meetings to reevaluate the whole church program. Among these discussions were: adding a \$300,000 education wing to the church, a new division of responsibilities for the Ministers of Education and Music-Youth, and Pastor Weekley’s growing drug addiction problem.

The reevaluations began on April 21 when Oscar Whitescarver issued his goals for the church education program:

My goal in the educational program of this church is to develop a Sunday School that is staffed with workers who are unashamed to put Jesus Christ foremost in their conversation, who point to Scriptures as authoritative support for their teaching, and who pray secretly, optimistically, and habitually during routines of their daily work.

- 1. These kinds of workers will be studious, always searching for truth.*
- 2. These kinds of workers will discover the joy, wonderment and gratification as God works through them to create miracles in the lives of other people.*
- 3. These kinds of workers will be involved in the moral and spiritual struggles of their friends and pupils.*

Isn’t this the kind of educational program that you want for Providence Baptist Church?

May 1964 was a busy month at Providence, beginning on May 3 when the 80-voice East High School Choir presented an inspirational “Special Music Program.” This was followed on May 8 by The Gay Nineties Party for adults, an old fashioned box supper catered by Colonel Sanders Kentucky Fried Chicken. The 10th Anniversary Homecoming Celebration was on May 17. The highlights of the homecoming were recognition of former members and distribution of the Special 10th Anniversary Church Yearbook.

Vacation Bible School was held June 8-19, 1964, with the theme, "Creative Teaching" in a regular school format. Enrollment exceeded 1963's total by 30 and ended with a special Parents' Night Program.

One of the June highlights was a Letter of Protest that Pastor Weekley sent to the Editor of *The Charlotte Observer* regarding the paper's new acceptance of liquor ads. A statement from the letter follows:

It is with great regret that I have noted The Charlotte Observer's first publishing of liquor advertisement. As a citizen of Charlotte, the father of four sons, and a clergyman of the community, I am writing to express respectful, but fervent protest

Special congratulations were sent to church member Arthur Smith in June 1964, as related in the *Pastorgram*:

.....on the walls of Arthur's new recording studios hang two trophies of which we as his church are duly proud. A Gold Record of his most famous composition, from MGM Recording Studios, given for his 'Guitar Boogie,' which sold over three million copies, and hanging next to it is a plaque which reads: 'Arthur Smith, Religious Emphasis Award, 1964.'

Summer was a busy time for Providence youth. The Special Ensemble directed by Martha Iley ended the year by displaying her high standards of dedication and musicianship. The annual Youth Retreat to Wildacres was August 3-8. Special Sunday night fellowships were bringing large numbers of youth to the church.

Providence youth sports teams had a good 1964 summer, capped off with the "little team" winning the baseball championship of the Grady Wilson League. The boys were ably coached by Ken Lail and Herb Rouse and supported by a loyal cheering section.

On July 27, the church in conference approved \$12,000 to build a "not-so-temporary" building for needed Sunday School space until architectural plans and construction of a new \$300,000 building could be completed in 1966. The temporary building would be built behind the Fellowship Building and actually built of brick veneer.....later the motion was amended to make it a permanent building.

Two new additions were made to the Music Ministry in May and June 1964. The first was a Teenage Touring Choir ages 7-12, to sing at other churches and at worship services, directed by Richard Ungerbuehler, Minister of Music. The second addition was a Handbell Choir patterned after St. John's Baptist Handbell Choir, which visited Providence in early June.

By July 1964, primarily due to anxiety and depression, Gordon Weekley had returned to his regular drug addiction routine. He stopped eating, which gave the drugs greater impact when ingested. He was also experiencing the delusion that addicts always have – delusion is the mother of denial.

Between July and September, a crisis developed in Weekley's total demeanor. By the end of September, his weight dropped to 126 pounds and many, inside and outside the church, were beginning to see the truth. Gordon, however, remained unaware of becoming an issue in the church.

In addition, the bond with his wife, Norma Lou, was deteriorating due to her lack of personal involvement in church activities and return to college. Weekley, however, could not acknowledge the impact of his drug addiction and immersion in the pastorate as being key factors in the growing deterioration of the relationship.

In mid-October, Deacon Chair Jarvis Warren and the Deacon Board held an extended meeting with Weekley culminating in a decision to grant him a six-month leave of absence to obtain medical help. He went to Bucknell University to live with his old college friend, Dr. Harold Miller, and to be treated by university medical personnel. He was diagnosed as a drug addict and given a strict prescription of abstinence and rest. It was a difficult time for Weekley and Harold Miller.

He returned home to Charlotte the Friday after Thanksgiving 1964 to a loving family reception. A few days later he was called to a heated session with the Deacon Board which ended with the Board agreeing to let Gordon preach one more sermon. To Weekley, as he reflected upon that sermon, it had to be a great or perfect sermon because his future rested upon it. Through it all, he was warmly supported by the congregation.

The sermon on Sunday, December 8, 1964, was a masterful blend of reflection, confession, restoration and appeal for acceptance of the new, restored Gordon Weekley. Following the sermon, the entire congregation came to the altar, along with nine new members. The powerful sermon had brought him back into the fold, but he would be watched closely.

September 1964 brought Promotion Day, recruitment for eight choirs, finding adequate meeting space for the Sunday School program and being without Gordon Weekley while on sick leave.

The beautiful Schulmerich handbells, the gift of church members Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jones and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Cessna, were displayed for the congregation on Sunday, September 28. By the end of 1964, there would be three touring handbell choirs: Junior High, Senior High and Adult.

In late September, Providence joined in financially helping a struggling Sharon Baptist Church with a contribution of \$1,500. Ed Echerd, a deacon and Superintendent of Missions for the Mecklenburg Baptist Association, led the support effort.

October and November 1964 were filled with budget and financial preparations for 1965. Budget Committee Chair R. Knox Edwards and Finance Committee Chair David Bodenhamer led in preparing the budget for 1965, which was presented to the church on November 22.

The annual Providence revival was shifted from the spring until November 22-25 in order to get Dr. James S. Potter, Pastor of Pritchard Memorial, to be the guest evangelist. The *Pastorgram*, in promoting it, called it the *Revival of Thanksgiving* a time for Providence people to count their blessings and be thankful.

The Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held during the first week of December with an offering goal of \$2,661. The guest speaker was Mrs. Sarah Bass, and special music was provided by Richard Ungerbuehler.

The Providence children's choirs presented special Christmas music at all the December services. The usual Christmas cantata in 1964 was replaced by "A Christmas Pageant," an original Providence production. In the pageant the Adult Choir sang "The Shepherd's Christmas" from the church balcony while the youth acted out the nativity scene. This pageant was produced and

directed by Mrs. Reagen Rowe and Mrs. William Cox. The homemade costumes were unusually pretty, and the music was in the familiar carols tradition. It was a huge success.

December 1964 saw two significant personnel changes. First, Elizabeth Connery was hired to replace Mrs. Warr as a Church Secretary. Second, and with a much greater impact on the immediate future of Providence, Oscar Whitescarver resigned as Minister of Education. As he stated in his letter of resignation:

I have felt the Lord preparing me for a move, and after talking with and visiting the First Baptist Church of Miami, Florida, I feel certain that accepting the call to become their Minister of Education is God's Will.

In retrospect, having to cover for Gordon Weekley's problems and assume much of his ministerial duties in an uncomfortable environment may have had a significant bearing on Whitescarver's decision to accept the call to Miami. His talents and contributions were sorely missed for years.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1964, the following guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Agbar Haqq, International Evangelist, New Delhi, India
 Dr. J. D. Hughey, Retired Baptist Missionary
 Dr. Stewart A. Newman, Professor of Religious Studies,
 Southeastern Baptist Seminary
 Dr. James S. Potter, Pastor, Pritchard Memorial Baptist
 Rev. Arnie Robertson, Pastor, Friendly Road Baptist
 Church, Greensboro
 Rev. Anis Shorrosh, Missionary Advisor to Jordan
 Dr. Budd Smith, President, Wingate College
 Dr. Wm. H. Williams, Pastor Emeritus, Pritchard Memorial
 Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

The 1965 Providence year began on Sunday, January 2, with the celebration of Gordon Weekley's tenth anniversary as pastor. During the morning worship service, Dr. Amos Bumgardner presented the Weekleys with a beautiful silver service. In the January 5 **Pastorgram**, Weekley responded: *The silver service is exquisitely beautiful. We shall cherish it always. Its sparkling beauty will forever remind us of the sparkle and warmth of the kind*

Christian love we have been so greatly showered with in these 10 years.

By January 1965, over 1,300 people had become "Providence Baptists." Church membership on January 1, 1965, was 996. Sunday School enrollment was 1,123. Training Union membership was 305, with an average attendance of 178. The 1955 budget was \$30,000, and the 1965 budget was \$150,000. Providence was an energetic, growing congregation.

The annual Winter Bible Study was held January 11-14, 1965. Dr. David Fletcher taught the book of Deuteronomy and gave the congregation a depth of spiritual knowledge and wisdom buried in a book of the Bible seldom read or studied. This was followed by a Choral Clinic January 25-29 at Park Road Baptist Church. The visiting director was Paul Peterson of the Salem College Voice Department in Winston-Salem. The clinic was open to all choir members in the Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

February 1965 began with a Brotherhood Meeting with guest speaker J. Leroy Graham, Chief Probation Officer for the Eastern District of South Carolina. His topic was "Witnessing." This was followed by the WMU General Meeting on February 8. The annual Sweetheart Banquet was on February 19 and concluded with a showing of the film, *My Fair Lady*.

The February 9, 1965, **Pastorgram** carried the headline, *Our Vision Is A Reality*. The reference was to the new Sunday School building that opened on February 14 for the Junior High II and the Senior High I groups. One of the larger rooms in the new building was decorated and furnished to provide a youth lounge.

From February 22-25, 1965, a Central Leadership School was held at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church with classes and seminars for all church leaders and teachers.

The week of March 1-7 was the Home Missions Week of Prayer with guest speaker Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor of the First Baptist Church. Dr. Warren pointed out that it took \$10.25 per minute to operate the total Home Missions program, exclusive of its building ministries.

The March 2, 1965, **Pastorgram** reported that Tackie Vosburgh was driving down Woodlark Lane to warn church members Ruby Brooks and Carolyn Leonard, among others, that a bandit was headed

that way. Just at that moment, he appeared from behind the homes on Woodlark and shattered the window of the Vosburgh station wagon with shots. Carolyn and Tackie, who was shot through both legs, were standing their ground pleading for the children in the car. Duane Bruch picked up a policeman in his car and helped apprehend the bandit. Mrs. Vosburgh and Mrs. Leonard were able to pull the children from the car before the bandit drove away.

The week of March 14-21, 1965, was Enrichment/Revival Week with guest evangelist Dr. Chester Swor, one of the best spiritual emphasis week speakers in the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. Swor was assisted by his intern-associate (No name was given for him.) with the revival music. In preparation for the revival, Providence held special prayer meetings and conducted a community visitation program.

The March 9, 1965, *Pastorgram* announced that Cindy Byrum had won the Charlotte Choral Society Scholarship and would spend the summer studying at Westminster College.

The March 16, 1965, *Pastorgram* announced Richard Ungerbuehler's resignation as Minister of Music and Youth. Richard would return to the business world and work in church music on a part-time basis in the Raleigh area. Alice Ungerbuehler would continue as Organist and Interim Minister of Music until June 1965. It was also announced that Jean Tillotson, a church member, had joined the staff as Secretary, replacing Elizabeth Connery, who was serving on a temporary basis.

On Thursday, April 8, 1965, Providence held its first Maundy Thursday Service, the beautiful traditional service on Thursday night of Holy Week when early churches used to wash the feet of the poor as fulfillment of a new commandment. The service concluded with the Sanctuary Choir's performance of "On The Passion Of Christ" by Williams.

The April 6, 1965, *Pastorgram* announced two staff additions. First, Helen Ann Connell, a rising senior at Westminster Choir College, was employed as the Summer Youth-Music Associate. Second, Laura Kissiah, a church member, joined the music staff as Church Organist. Laura was currently employed by Trinity Presbyterian Church as Assistant Organist and Choirmaster.

The April 20, 1965, *Pastorgram* announced a near future Mission Project. Ed Echerd, Associational Superintendent of Missions and a Providence member, asked the Missions Committee to consider sponsoring a mission church in the area of Sharon Road and Quail Hollow. As Gordon Weekley stated:

As pastor, it is impressed on me these days to draw the attention of our congregation to what I believe is a tremendously important consideration: WE SHOULD NOT BE MUCH LONGER HELPING BRING A NEW CHURCH INTO BEING!

In special conference on May 9, 1965, the church voted to call Rev. Dean Kaufman from the Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, as the new Minister of Education. Rev. Kaufman was recommended by several top-ranking Sunday School Board members, some of whom were members of the Woodmont Church. In a telegram dated May 11, 1965, Dean replied as follows: *In response to a feeling of being Divinely led, I accept your call to become Minister of Education. I plan to begin work around July 15.*

The church at the same special conference voted to call Rev. Reece M. Hagler, a retired Baptist Minister, as Interim Associate Pastor. Rev. Hagler would do pastoral visitation, hospital calls, prospect visitation and preach when requested. His task was to provide relief to Pastor Weekley until Dean Kaufman arrived and the position of Minister of Music was filled.

On Sunday, May 16, 1965, Providence celebrated its 11th Anniversary, and all former members were invited to share the day. Everyone enjoyed the food, fellowship and fun at the dinner-on-the-grounds following the morning worship service. Anniversary Day ended with a beautiful and inspiring GA Coronation Service.

May 30, 1965, was Baccalaureate Sunday with 25 graduates, the largest number in Providence's history. They were honored at the 11:00 am service. College Commencement Recognition Day was observed on Sunday, June 6, with seven graduates.

The June 15, 1965, *Pastorgram* announced that Helen Ann Connell, a senior at Westminster Choir College in New Jersey, had begun her work as the Summer Director of Youth and Music. Her major task was to shape the plans for the social and spiritual phases

of the youth ministry. She would also direct the Youth Handbell Choir, the Chapel Choir and the Sanctuary Choir.

On June 17, 1965, the guest speaker was Rev. Rodney Collins, Pastor of the Willsden Baptist Church in London. Pastor Weekley, in London for the Baptist World Alliance in 1955 and again through London en route to Africa in 1960, had preached at Willsden. In 1965, Rev. Collins was at Providence to return those visits.

On June 27, 1965, the deacons, Finance Committee and president of the WMU unanimously voted to accept a proposal from the Mecklenburg Baptist Association to sponsor a new church on 5.6 acres at the corner of Carmel Road and Sharon View Road. The \$56,000 cost of the land would be split between the Association and Providence. In special conference on July 11, 1965, the church voted to join the Association in purchasing the land for a new church. As sponsor of the new Carmel Mission, the cost to Providence would be \$28,000 for half of the land cost and 30 to 75 families leaving to become leaders and members of the new church.

Ed Echerd, Jr., in an article entitled *Partners in Missions*, stated:

It is now a matter of history that because of the initiative of the Association there is a Providence. Let the record now declare that the response of Providence is itself true to the best spirit and the full commitment of Christian missions where we live. A church which is not missionary may falter. A mission-minded congregation is a winner for Christ's sake.

The Kaufman family joined the work and worship of Providence on July 15, 1965. Dean and Dorothy Kaufman had three sons: Dale, Gary and Norman. Dean, a native of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, came to Providence with a rich background of academic training, highly successful experience in the field of youth work and religious education, and a genuine spirit of earnest Christian dedication. He was a graduate of Southern Seminary, earning the Bachelor of Divinity Degree. A reception for the Kaufmans followed the evening service.

Dean, in the July 20 *Pastorgram*, responded as follows:*It was a real joy to participate in the activities of last Sunday. The reception was a splendid period for Christian fellowship and getting acquainted.*

The annual Vacation Bible School was held August 9-20, 1965, beginning with Preparation Day on August 6 and culminating with Parents Night on August 20. This was followed by the Youth Retreat to Canaanland at Lake Toxaway August 23-26. The retreat was planned and conducted by Helen Ann Connell, the Summer Youth Associate, who did a wonderful job.

In the August 24, 1965 **Pastorgram**, the Music Committee announced that Charles Starnes, popular Choral Director at East Mecklenburg High School, would serve as Interim Music Director until a full-time Minister of Music could be employed. The committee also expressed its gratitude to Helen Ann Connell for her splendid work with the choirs during the summer months. The same **Pastorgram** said *Goodbye* to her as follows:

She has quickly become a part of the Providence family, working her way into our hearts as Director of Youth and Music for the summer. We shall miss her effervescent personality, her beautiful voice and her willing spirit. Our best wishes for this senior year at Westminster College, and our thanks for a summer of very fruitful labor here.

The WMU Installation Service was held on September 7 with guest speaker and installer Mrs. A.L. Parker of Greensboro, State WMU President. This was followed on September 13 by the Brotherhood Dinner, featuring Mayor Stan Brookshire as speaker.

September 1965 was State Missions Emphasis Month. The state goal was \$200,000, with \$175,000 to Fruitland. Others receiving support from the offering were: evangelism, Baptist colleges, hospitals, church music and student work. Providence members were encouraged to pray for and support State Missions with their offerings. There was no information about Providence setting a goal for the offering.

In the September 21, 1965, **Pastorgram**, Dean Kaufman announced that Sunday School Promotion Day would be October 3, and that Christmas craft classes would begin on October 13 with Dorothy Smith leading the effort. In addition, the Providence kindergarten for children in underprivileged Piedmont Courts and surrounding areas would be sponsored by the WMU.

The October 4 Brotherhood Meeting featured Charlotte lawyer Peter Gerns discussing an unusual topic, "The Illegal Trial of Jesus."

The October 12, 1965, **Pastorgram** carried the following Note of Interest: *The Westminster College Choir will sing at the White House in October, and Helen Ann Connell will be the soloist for the performance.* It also carried a poem written by Providence youth Alice Kissiah:

*I gave my life to Christ one day.
 Not very long ago.
 I know I'll not regret it,
 Because He loves me so.
 He is my Lord and Master,
 He leads me all the way.
 I just can't help but follow Him,
 Throughout the night and day.
 He helps me in this world of woe,
 And speaks to me through prayer.
 He lifts me up when I am low;
 I know He's everywhere.
 He shares in all my sorrows.
 And leads through shadows dim;
 He's such a loving Savior,
 What can I do for Him?
 I know I'll try to live for Him.
 Through every path I go;
 Because I love my Savior,
 And I know He loves me so.*

The 1966 Stewardship Emphasis Campaign began on October 31 with the theme, "Providence Baptist Church Is In Your Hands." This campaign was essential due to the commitment to help start the Carmel Mission and the loss of members to Carmel.

On October 29, 1965, many Providence members were watching the Miss Teenage America Pageant from Dallas, Texas. Providence member and Miss Charlotte Teenager of the Year, Cindy Byrum, was a contestant. The November 2 **Pastorgram** stated: *We were mighty proud of you as we watched on national TV. We were not surprised that you were first runner-up Miss Teenage America. Here is much love and congratulations from your church.*

In the November 9, 1965 **Pastorgram**, the Music Committee announced that John W. Sanders would become the new Minister of

Music. John was Choral Director at Garinger High School and had served as Minister of Music for St. Luke's United Methodist Church for several years. At the time of the announcement, he was already at work laying plans for the full reactivation of Providence's total choir program.

Carmel Baptist Church was formally organized on November 15, 1965, with Providence as its sponsoring church. The November 22 *Pastorgram* stated, *We have looked with pride and deep, spiritual joy at our part in the beginning of Carmel.* In addition to the \$28,000 toward purchase of the land, Providence lettered out 75 of its 1,092 members to Carmel.

The 1965 Community Thanksgiving Service was held November 25 at the Cotswold East Mall. The Litany of Thanksgiving was led by Mayor Stan Brookshire, and Gordon Weekley delivered the Thanksgiving Sermon.

November 28-December 5, 1965, was World Missions Emphasis Week with the theme, "Every Member In Every Church Sharing In World Missions Through The Cooperative Program." Providence had three guest speakers during the week. The first was Rev. John McGee. Since 1962, Providence and its members had invested thousands of dollars in Rev. McGee's missionary work in Africa. Church members had put several of his students through seminary. Two Providence families alone had given ministerial education to 16 of his converts. Rev. McGee spoke at both services on November 28. During the Wednesday night service, Dr. Cameron Townsend, founder of the Wycliffe Translators, was the guest speaker. Lastly, Mrs. C. C. Warren, wife of the Pastor of the First Baptist Church, taught the WMU Mission Study. The 1965 Providence Lottie Moon Offering goal was \$3,060.

All the Providence choirs, under the direction of new Minister of Music John Sanders, presented a Christmas music program at the December 19 evening service. The program consisted of sacred and popular Christmas music.

The 1965 Providence year concluded with the New Year's Eve Watch Night Program, beginning with the 10:00-11:30 pm program of fun, fellowship, prayer and food. From 11:30-12:00 midnight worship was held in the sanctuary, and starting at 12:15 am a New Year's Breakfast was served in the fellowship hall.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1965, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Leighton Ford, Billy Graham Team Member
 Rev. Rodney Collins, Pastor, Willisden Baptist, London
 Rev. Arthur Francis, Retired Baptist Pastor, Monroe
 Rev. Reece M. Hagler, Associate Pastor
 Rev. Dean Kaufman, New Minister of Education
 Rev. John McGee, Missionary to Africa
 Rev. Aubrey Patterson, Staff Member, Pritchard Memorial
 Dr. Chester Swor, Evangelist
 Dr. Cameron Townsend, Founder, Wycliffe Translators
 Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist Church

At Providence, 1966 began with the celebration of Gordon Weekley's eleventh anniversary as pastor. As the January 4 *Pastorgram* stated: *If statistics were the sole judge of achievements, then we would say that under his leadership we have made marvelous gains. From 150 members to 1,280 having united with Providence, is wonderful indeed.*

On January 1, 1966, Beulah Smith began her eighth year on the church staff. She began as Church Secretary but in staff restructuring was given the title of Financial Secretary. During the eight years, Beulah had endeared herself to Providence members by her cordial and friendly personality and her transparent dedication to our Lord.

The guest minister on January 9, 1966, was Dr. John Morris with the topic, "Ambassadors for Christ." Dr. Morris and his wife had served over 30 years as missionaries in Argentina and Korea. In 1966, he was in semi-retirement while teaching at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

January 1966 was a quiet month at Providence, closing with church members participating in the Associational Adult Sunday School Conference at Pritchard Memorial. The conference was designed for adult Sunday School officers and teachers. Mrs. John Sizemore was the Adult Consultant.

The annual Providence Winter Bible Study was held February 6-10, 1966, with Dr. Allen West teaching the book of John. Dr. West was Pastor of the Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

During the February 6 vesper hour, the speaker was Rev. Gene McGee, Director of Youth for Christ of France.

Much of February 1966 focused upon "Planning for the Future." As the February 22 *Pastorgram* stated: *Providence Baptist Church must look to the future in many of its programs and buildings. Right now we are overcrowded in several of our departments.*

March 6-13, 1966, was the Week of Prayer for Home Missions with special guest speaker Larry Bryson, Director of Cherokee Indian Missions. As Dean Kaufman stated in his column:

The results of your Annie Armstrong Offering stretch from Alaska to Panama.....from Hawaii to New York. This is the offering that makes possible the Home Missions work of Southern Baptists. Rural churches are built; goodwill centers are built and operated; rescue missions reach the 'down and out,' and missionaries are sent to spread the message of salvation. This year's goal for Providence is \$844.47.

On March 6, 1966, under the direction of Mrs. Ned Hyman, Training Union Director, two new ministries began: a Visitation Seminar taught by Dean Kaufman and a New Members Class taught by Gordon Weekley. In the future these two classes would be offered three times a year. The object of the classes was to involve members in church visitation and help new members answer the question *Where Do I Fit In?*

The week of March 14 marked the first anniversary of Jean Tillotson's tenure as Office Secretary. Jean was the main stenographer for dictation and correspondence as well as production of the Sunday bulletin and *Pastorgram*. In addition, she kept records for church organizations.

At the April 3 vesper hour, the Sanctuary Choir presented a concert entitled "The Seven Last Words" directed by John Sanders, Minister of Music. This was followed on April 6 by the Belmont College Men's Glee Club from Nashville, Tennessee. The Glee Club, composed of 32 male singers, was directed by Robert E. Mulloy, a widely known composer and frequent writer for Baptist publications. They gave a memorable concert of sacred music.

The April 12, 1966, *Pastorgram* reported on the two music programs as follows:

.....*The comments on our Sanctuary Choir's 'Seven Last Words' were spoken as though the entire congregation spoke in unison 'THE BEST EVER!' Then Wednesday night we heard music at the near perfection point as the Belmont College Glee Club sang a program of widely ranging repertory, with profound overtones of Christian dedication. Though we have heard many college choirs, this was the best our ears have ever heard. . .ever!*

In called conference on April 17, 1966, the church approved a 41-member Building Committee. The committee was charged with planning and developing plans for the next phase of the church building program.

Sunday, May 1, 1966, was Laymen's Day, beginning with breakfast and Arthur Smith as the speaker. Dean Kaufman preached at 11:00 am, and the laymen had charge of the service with a laymen's choir. At the vesper hour Tully Blair, a retired insurance company president, spoke.

In the May 3 **Pastorgram**, Dean Kaufman announced that the summer Philadelphia Mission Trip was being planned and that the mission churches in the Philadelphia area had requested 28 youth and adult helpers for the mission projects.

Providence celebrated its 12th Anniversary on Sunday, May 15, 1966. Along with recognition of charter members and dinner-on-the-grounds, the guest preacher was Dr. Grady Wilson, church member and Billy Graham Team Associate, who would soon be leaving for the 1966 London Crusade.

In the May 10 **Pastorgram**, Dean Kaufman gave a summary of Providence's 12-year progress:

1,914 had been members of the Sunday School and 1,456 had joined the church. In addition, properties totaling \$554,210 had been made possible by the financial contributions of the congregation. The new Building Committee chaired by Tom Pfaff had been chosen. Along side these material and statistical facts, we could find no way of describing the many spiritual events which these years have provided. The assuaging of grief, the joys of marriage, the sweet experiences attendant upon the birth of little ones, the study of the Word, the preaching of the unsearchable riches of God,

the decisions for Christ, the rededications of lives to God, the many thousands of dollars channeled toward world missions, the molding of the lives of our young people. How He has blessed us. Let us recommit ourselves to Him in a great day Sunday.

May 1966 ended with the Baccalaureate Service and GA Coronation Banquet on May 19. Pastor Weekley preached a special message for the seniors, and the GA highlight was a mission dramatization entitled "Proclaim to Every Nation," the coronation theme. Dean Kaufman was featured in *The Charlotte Observer* Sunday Edition, which discussed his talents in Christian education, crafts, and cooking. The article had photos of Dorothy and Dean and their craft work and cooking recipes.

June 1966 was a quiet month, with much of the time and efforts being spent on planning and conducting the annual Vacation Bible School. Most of the dialogue centered around "Juice Sundays" which were designed to quench the thirst of the students.

On June 20, 1966, 14 Providence youth and adults departed by auto to the Philadelphia area to assist churches and missions in a week of Bible School and survey work. This project was conducted in cooperation with the Home Mission Board.

The June 13 *Pastorgram* announced the June 18 wedding at Wilson Grove Baptist Church of Helen Ann Connell to Tim Jordan. Helen Ann was Providence's 1965 Summer Youth and Music Associate.

The Building Committee, chaired by Tom Pfaff, made its first report to the congregation on June 22, 1966. In summary, the committee had met, divided into subcommittees and prepared a composite picture of the type building they believed the church wanted. At the June 22 presentation, the committee gave the church a month to "talk back," expressing approval or disapproval, make suggestions, and ask questions. Tom Pfaff stated, *We cannot and will not proceed with our building program until we are sure this program and this building is what our people want and will support.*

July 1966 was filled with activities surrounding the new building program, Ridgecrest retreats, reports from the Philadelphia Mission Project, sports activities, church attendance and financial giving. It concluded with the July 31 vesper service in which Rev. Eladio

Bolanos told of his emergence out of a paganistic and superstitious religious background into the happy and certain relationship with God. Rev. Bolanos, a teacher at Christian High School, and his family had been members of Providence for just a few months.

During the summer of 1966, Providence was actively engaged in a variety of local mission projects, i.e. the Thursday Seigle Avenue Kindergarten Program and using the Green Giant Church Bus to bring underprivileged children from Piedmont Courts to Providence for Bible School.

In the August 16, 1966 *Pastorgram*, Gordon Weekley reported that church membership had surpassed what it was in 1965 when Providence gave \$28,000 and sent 75 of its members to help start Carmel Baptist Church. He closed his statement with the wise advice that Dr. C. C. Warren, long a visionary leader among Southern Baptists and a close friend of Providence, had given him: *Give, Gordon! Give money and people. You'll have it all back soon – and more – the way God works.*

In the August 16 *Pastorgram*, Dean Kaufman shared a letter he had received from the Delaware Valley Baptist Association: *Five of our churches and missions were strengthened by the 14 young people and adults from Providence Baptist Church.They let their lives, work and conduct testify to the love of Christ in their hearts.*

On August 30, 1966, the church received a letter from Rev. John McGee, one of Providence's favorite missionaries to Africa. Back to his field of service following a year of furlough, Rev. McGee reported that he was helping build the Ikogosi Youth Camp, the Ridgecrest of Baptist work in Nigeria. A financial gift from two Providence members had made it possible for him to buy six more acres of land for the camp.

On September 12, 1966, the Brotherhood guest speaker was Rev. W. T. Harding, a missionary to Ethiopia. On September 13 the WMU Bible Study, entitled "Great Is The Company," was led by Mary Ann Crouch. A workshop for all primary workers on September 12 was conducted by Mrs. John Tubbs, wife of the Sunday School Secretary of the Maryland Baptist Convention.

The September 13, 1966, *Pastorgram* announced that Dr. Grady Wilson, Providence member and Billy Graham Associate, was

featured in a full-page *Associated Press* Feature Article on American Evangelism. The title of the article was "Evangelist in the Bible Belt" gathered from Grady's Harlan, Kentucky, Crusade in July 1965.

Sunday, October 2, 1966, was Promotion Day and also the beginning of dual worship services at 8:45 and 11:00 am. In addition, a new order of worship was begun that received many flattering comments from the congregation.

While Pastor Weekley was vacationing, the guest speaker on October 16 was Dr. John Patterson, a Professor of Theology at the Cali Baptist Seminary in Colombia. He was also Pastor of a church there and served as Executive Secretary of the Colombian Baptist Convention.

The 1967 Budget Campaign began in October 1966 and culminated with Dedication Card Day on November 6. The November 15 *Pastorgram* announced "Victory!" Stewardship Campaign pledges registered \$164,807, nearly \$15,000 more than the 1966 budget. Pastor Weekley summed it up this way: *It says to the staff and lay leadership of our church: Onward!*

The 1966 revival was held the week of November 27 and was preceded by 24 cottage prayer meetings and a Day of Prayer. The guest evangelist was Dr. Paul Stevens, Director of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. As the November 29 *Pastorgram* stated: *He moved into the church sanctuary and hearts of our people with a powerful impact. He is a gifted man! He is an ideal expository preacher!* It was a great week with many new members and a sense of renewal for the year ahead.

December 5-9, 1966, was the Season of Prayer for Foreign Missions with the theme, "The Lamb of God." On December 11, Dr. Coleman Clark, missionary to Japan, brought the message as the Lottie Moon guest missionary. The 1966 Lottie Moon Offering goal was \$14,500,000, with the Providence goal being \$3,349.

The 1966 Christmas Season began with the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, followed by the Music Ministry's Christmas programs. On December 18, the Sanctuary Choir presented the Christmas Oratorio directed by John Sanders, and on December 21 the Youth Choirs led the Candlelight Service with a cantata entitled "God With Us, Emmanuel," directed by John Sanders.

Sunday, December 25, 1966, was Christmas Day. As a result, there was only one major worship service – no Sunday School and no evening activities.

The year 1966 ended with a decision by the Deacon Board to divide the church membership into geographical areas for Watchcare Ministry. The ***Pastorgram*** would list the deacons and their families week-by-week. The first deacon with his watchcare families to be listed was Aubrey Arant.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1966, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Larry Bryson, Director, Cherokee Indian Missions

Dr. Coleman Clark, Missionary to Japan

Rev. Don Johnson, Wycliffe Bible Translators

Rev. Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education

Rev. Gene McGee, Dir., Youth for Christ, Paris, France

Dr. John Norris, Retired Missionary and Union Seminary Professor

Rev. Aubrey Patterson, Minister of Youth, Pritchard Mem.

Dr. John Patterson, Missionary to Colombia

Dr. Paul M. Stevens, Executive Director, Radio and TV Commission of Southern Baptist Convention

Dr. Allen West, Pastor, Woodmont Baptist, Nashville, TN

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

January 1, 1967, was a Sunday and as the ***Pastorgram*** stated: *We shall celebrate the coming of 1967 – God's gift to us of another clean slate of opportunity – by worshipping Him on New Year's Day with a full program of services.*

Gordon Weekley began his thirteenth year as Pastor in January 1967. As Dean Kaufman stated in the January 4 ***Pastorgram***:

From a mere infant to a body reaching toward spiritual maturity, you have led us these 12 years. Perhaps we've not been as faithful to your leadership as we should, but as you begin a new year of service, we pledge anew our desire and willingness to support you as you depend upon the leadership of Christ. We pray that God shall bless our ministry together.

The slogan that faced the Providence congregation in early January was "Build in Sixty-Seven!" Due to increasing cramped

facilities, members were asked to accept the challenge to "Build in '67." Each family had been sent a questionnaire and the responses to that questionnaire would determine whether there would be a building program for Providence in 1967.

In the January 11, 1967 **Pastorgram**, Dean Kaufman stated:

*After 12 years of waiting, Providence Baptists are now enjoying the dignity and beauty of a printed Sunday bulletin and a weekly newsletter, **The Pastorgram**. These publications guide our people in the order of worship and enable the church staff to carry on a vital promotional communication with our ever-expanding church family.Recently, the Bill Cessna family made possible the acquisition of all necessary equipment for this project to honor Bill who died last year.*

On January 17, 1967, Dean Kaufman learned through Martha Iley, former Minister of Music and current director of the Junior Vesper Girls' Choir, that Providence's Interim Organist was Owen Hatch, a composer of distinction. Martha shared with Dean that this was the "Hatch" who composed a number of anthems, many of them accepted and published by the Chorister's Guild.

The January 25, 1967, **Pastorgram** announced that Celeste Needy would replace Owen Hatch as the guest organist on an interim basis. In addition, Mrs. Robert Fowler was replacing Jean Tillotson as Office Secretary. Mrs. Fowler had previously served as Secretary at Midwood Baptist Church. The same **Pastorgram** also announced that Providence had entered into a contract with Pictorial Church Directories of America to produce the 1967 church yearbook and carry the pictures of the church members.

In the February 1, 1967 **Pastorgram**, Jean Tillotson stated:

It has been a real joy and a very rewarding experience for me to work as a secretary for Providence for the past two years. Not only was I working for a church and a pastor, but I was working for my church and pastor. It will be hard to work for anyone else.

On February 14, as a part of the Home Mission Week of Prayer, the WMU had Elizabeth Campbell, Associational Missionary from Lenoir, as guest speaker. Her topic was "Forest Trails in Urban Jungles." That same week Anis Shorrosh, a Southern Baptist

Missionary to Vietnam, dropped by for a visit. It was also announced that Dennis Kirkley had been selected as Providence's second Foreign Exchange Student and would study in Chile in 1968.

The annual Winter Bible Study Course was taught February 19-25, 1967, with study sessions for all age groups. The adults were taught the book of Amos, one of the most spiritually valuable books of the Bible, by Dr. George Redding, Professor of Bible at Georgetown College in Kentucky.

The February 22, 1967, **Pastorgram** announced that nearly 47% of church families had returned the building survey questionnaire, surpassing the Building Committee's projections. The committee then evaluated these questionnaires, prepared a summary of the congregation's building expectations, and interviewed three architectural firms. On February 28, Chair Tom Pfaff reported that the firm of Tebee Hawkins, Inc. had been chosen to draw the plans and supervise the new building construction.

On February 24, 1967, former Minister of Music and Organist Doris M. Gibson was married at Providence. The lucky groom was Jim Niven.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 6-12, 1967, with the theme, "As You Go." The National Home Missions goal was \$4,500,000, with the Providence goal being \$971.14. The week's guest speaker was Mrs. Fred Propst from Atlanta, an acknowledged expert in the field of Home Missions.

On March 12, 1967, 15 new members joined the church, an all-time record in Providence's 13-year history.

As March 1967 drew to a close, there was much enthusiasm, energy and record-setting. Sunday School enrollment exceeded 700 for the first time. On March 26, in the two morning worship services, attendance reached 731. As the March 29 **Pastorgram** headline stated: *We Just Wonder.....What We Would Have Done, If We Had Not Started Two Services Last October.*

That Sunday night every seat was packed. The balcony was filled and people standing in the vestibule for the beautiful sacred music concert by the Furman University Singers. The new buildings were needed and the sooner the better. The future looked very good for Gordon Weekley and Providence Baptist Church.

Two significant events occurred during the first week of April 1967. The first was that the Hawkins Architects presented the first drawings of the new building plans to the General Building Committee chaired by Tom Pfaff. The second was hiring Mrs. Mercer Wilson as Community Missionary. Several Providence women, under the WMU, had been sponsoring a one-day-a-week kindergarten program for two inner-city areas for about a year. With Mrs. Wilson's hiring, the church's work in these two areas would be increased from two days a week to five days a week. Mrs. Wilson would supervise the work and seek to involve more of the Providence members in working at Seigle Avenue Presbyterian Church and Allen Street Baptist Church.

The Providence Sunday School Program in 1967 was based upon the Southern Baptist system of graded classes with females and males being taught separately. This system was challenged between February-May 1967 by the Men's Fellowship Class taught by Mercer Blankenship. Four class members, Mercer Blankenship, Hollis Baxter, Edd George and Jim Royster, decided to bring their wives and make it a Couples' Class, challenging church policy. This led to a three-month crisis for Providence and Gordon Weekley. The Deacon Board, chaired by Arthur Smith, asked Minister of Education Dean Kaufman to study the situation and report back to the Board. In discussions with the four families and class, Kaufman reported that if the church policy was not changed to permit mixed classes, the disaffected members would work to get Gordon Weekley fired and, if necessary, withhold funds from the church. At a called church conference on April 2, 1967, the congregation voted to retain the graded church policy and gave Gordon Weekley a strong vote of confidence. The disaffected families gradually left the church.

On April 30, 1967, the Building Committee presented the New Master Plan for completing the building for the eight-acre property purchased in 1954, and it was approved unanimously by the congregation. In addition, the church hired Marshall Thompson of the prominent national fund-raising corporation of Ketchum, Inc. to design the church's fund-raising program in preparation for the new building program. Thompson chose to use small, intimate dinners with church members to sell the campaign.

May 1967 was a busy month, beginning with the GA's Coronation Banquet on May 7. The next two weeks saw the presentation of Alternate Plans A and B for the building program. Sunday, May 21, was Providence's 13th Anniversary Celebration with dinner-on-the-grounds. The special guests were the 46 new members who had joined Providence since February 1. The day concluded with a Choir Recognition Service during the vesper hour. The special music was beautifully performed by the Bethlehem, Carol, Vesper and Chapel Choirs. Sunday, May 28, was Baccalaureate Day for the 28 high school graduates.

Sunday, June 4, 1967, was Laymen's Day, with the boys and men conducting the services. The guest speaker was Dr. Sam Russell from Florence, South Carolina. As the *Pastorgram* put it:

Dr. Russell is one of South Carolina's most refreshing new Christians. He is a great golfer and a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, a close friend of Bobby Richardson whose place he is taking in our pulpit and who will share with us the story of his new-found life in Christ.

The week of June 11 was Vacation Bible School with nearly 75 teachers and about 300 students involved in Bible Study, arts, crafts, and storytelling. The highlight of the week was Parents Night on June 14 when the students showed their parents the good things they had done during Bible School mornings.

From June 18-28, 1967, Providence sent its second Home Mission group to assist the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in the pioneer mission area of southern New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Linda Wilson, Jeanne Hyman, Beth West and Carol Ann McLaney conducted a mission Bible School in Lakehurst, New Jersey. Mrs. Weekley, Pat Hall, Pam Wester, Tishe Stoker and George Eison assisted the Ewing Church in Trenton in conducting a Bible School. Alice Kissiah, Linda David and Dean Kaufman helped the Haines Road Baptist Church in Levittown, Pennsylvania, conduct a Bible School.

A special wedding was held at Providence on July 8, 1967. Nancy Carol Wilson, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Grady Wilson, was married to Gerald Ray Gardner. A Philadelphia florist, a close friend of Dr. Wilson, beautifully decorated the sanctuary. In addition, several members of the Billy Graham Team participated. Pianist Ted

Smith played creative, deeply spiritual wedding music. Cliff Barrows and George Beverly Shea sang lovely, moving songs.

On July 26, the church announced that Dr. Amos Bumgardner, Russell Tucker and Mrs. William Crawley would serve as co-chairs of the church Growth Fund Campaign. They quickly adopted a password to be used around the church, "WHEN YOU ARE ASKED, SAY YES." The co-chairs worked closely with Marshall Thompson, Financial Consultant of the Ketchum Corporation.

In a special called conference on Sunday, August 6, 1967, the church voted unanimously to build Phase A of the Ultimate Church Structure. The estimated cost of Phase A was \$45,000, to be raised in a nine-week campaign during September and October. As the **Pastorgram** stated:

It is MOST important that the financial campaign be considered as the life-and-death predecessor to actual construction. We plead with each and every member of our congregation to remember the slogan which will be heard constantly in the days ahead: 'WHEN ASKED, SAY YES' – to any portion of this campaign which will be directed toward you.

Providence's inner city mission work resumed in August with a Vacation Bible School for the Piedmont Courts children. The Jolly Green Giant Bus brought the children to Providence for the Bible Study and spiritual inspiration provided by Minister of Education Dean Kaufman and a team of teens and adults. A good time was had by all who participated.

In August Bill and Connie Andrews, Providence's Southern Baptist missionary family, were given use of the church house on Hunter Lane as their home while on furlough from Chile. Their son, Jay, chose to spend the year with the Paul Godfrey family while attending high school.

The guest soloist for the August 20, 1967, morning worship service was Ken Cantril, star of three Ovens Auditorium Summer Theatre productions. Mr. Cantril was a close friend of the Keith Clements family of Providence. In addition to his work in the field of entertainment, Ken was the leader of the baritone section of the Bedford Presbyterian Church of Manhattan. For his Providence solo, Ken sang Malotte's beautiful "Twenty-third Psalm."

During the week of August 23, 1967, Providence welcomed back Dennis Kirkley who had served as a summer exchange student to Santiago, Chile. Dennis shared his South American experiences on August 27. In addition, Dennis would soon become president of the East Mecklenburg High School student body.

On September 1, 1967, the Eight-Week Growth Campaign began. As the **Pastorgram** stated:

We begin a two-month all-out effort to assure the income we will need from our people to erect that lovely portion of our architectural plan known as Phase No. I in the two remaining phases of completing our dream church.So, when you are asked: 'Say YES'.....no matter how small a duty you are given.

The campaign was directed by the able team of Dr. Amos Bumgardner, Russell Tucker and Mrs. Bill Crawley, along with Financial Consultant Marshall Thompson from the Ketchum Company.

The Growth Campaign sales strategy had four church-sponsored and funded Interpretative Dinners from September 26-29. All adult members of the church, along with church friends, were invited to dinners. Following each dinner, special music and a "controlled program" of talks were designed to tell attendees about Phase I and how the church was going to accomplish it. The dinners were highly effective in gaining member support and financial commitments.

October 1, 1967, was Promotion Day for the new church year and Dedication Day for the Building Growth Fund Campaign. As the **Pastorgram** stated:

During the past several weeks, presentations have been made for our Campaign visitations. Educational materials have been distributed, training meetings have been held, interpretative dinners sponsored and an organization established. Now the time has come for us to make SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS.

The pledging began on November 5, 1967, and continued for 39 months. Trained and committed crusaders visited each church family to obtain committed pledges for the Growth Campaign. The September 27 **Pastorgram** stated: *When you see the man with the black portfolio, you will know he is from your church. He will*

represent you and God's work through Providence Baptist Church – and its growth.

The Victory Program goal to be secured during the eight-week campaign was a minimum of \$300,000. At the half-way mark on October 18, co-chair Russell Tucker announced that pledges had reached over \$150,000. On October 22, 1967, Tucker announced that commitments for the \$300,000 had been received, with many cards still out – VICTORY HAD BEEN ACHIEVED. The Building Committee could now meet with the architects and establish plans. Building Committee Chair Tom Pfaff announced on November 1, 1967, that the target date for obtaining the final draft of the building plans was March 1, 1968.

The WMU and the Brotherhood held a joint meeting on November 6, 1967. Following dinner, Mrs. Margaret McRacken taught a study course entitled “Arrows to Adams,” a mission insight into the desperate needs of Africa and the role of Southern Baptists in trying to answer part of those needs. This course was taught to help prepare the church for the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions that preceded the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

On November 12, it was announced that Providence had made another contribution to the new Carmel Baptist Church in addition to the \$28,000 to help purchase the land. Providence loaned Mrs. Grace Tillotson as pianist and Martha Iley as Music Director for nearly six months. Martha also took Providence's talented Vesper Girls' Choir for the November 12 vesper hour service.

Following the 8:30 am worship service on November 12, Deacon Chair Arthur Smith and Sunday School Superintendent Bryan Coates held a hurried meeting and decided they could not let Gordon Weekley preach the 11:00 am worship service due to the obvious drug problem. Gordon and Norma Lou had continued to drift apart during 1967, due primarily to tensions caused by the drugs. On November 17, she left him and went to live with her parents in Belmont. Gordon Weekley was now a broken man in desperate need of a psychiatrist.

On November 18, 1967, Gordon Weekley wrote his letter of resignation as pastor and sent it to the church by his eldest son, Steve. It read as follows:

November 18, 1967

*To the Congregation of Providence Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina*

My Dear Friends:

It has been a glorious experience to serve as your pastor during the past twelve, nearly thirteen years. As we have labored together since this church was formed, God has rewarded our efforts and a potentially great and powerful church has come into being.

At this time, under the advice of my doctors, and following a thorough physical examination, I am forced to conclude that I must tender my resignation as your pastor and let God lead you on to higher and greater things in that part of His vineyard.

I am grateful for the provisions Mrs. Weekley has transmitted to me through a conference with Mr. Kaufman that you will allow my salary to continue six months. For one who is now without a church this is of immense help to my family and me and will allow me to regain the strength I have lost through the ever-mounting pressures of a busy pastorate which finally have taken their toll on me.

I shall pray for you as you seek your new minister and shall follow the progress of Providence Baptist Church in my prayers always.

Thank you for the many kindnesses shown me during these years; you have blessed all the Weekleys in more ways than we could ever count.

God's richest blessings on each family of the church.

Sincerely and affectionately yours for Christ's sake,

Gordon Weekley

To the majority of Providence Baptist Church's members, Gordon Weekley's resignation came as a huge shock. However, to Gordon, it became a 30-year nightmare filled with drug addiction, stays in mental hospitals and rescue missions, with short rays of sunshine in which he would preach, teach and minister to others. It came to a close on November 16, 1998, in Asheville, when the Death Certificate stated that he died as a consequence of alcohol intoxication.

Evaluating Gordon Weekley's tenure as Pastor of Providence Baptist Church is not easy. From a positive perspective, he took a young, struggling church of about 100 members in 1954 and led it to a membership of 1,136 at the time of his resignation in 1967. Along with the membership growth, Providence earned a reputation as a dynamic, progressive congregation that participated actively in all phases of Southern Baptist church life. It, like its pastor, was known as a leader, both locally and nationally.

Gordon Weekley's pastorate style was a huge factor in his personal and professional difficulties in the end. To him Christianity, as his eldest son, Steve, once said, was about "love." So was Gordon Weekley. He was a hands-on pastor, presiding more with his heart than his head. Gordon was also very idealistic and led by serving.

Gordon Weekley did not return to Providence Baptist Church until March 15, 1975. On this occasion, he was married to Misty DeBruhl. He took his vows from Rev. Bill Kaufman before a sanctuary filled nearly to capacity with former congregation members. His next visit was in May 1987 when the newly refurbished fellowship building was being given a new name. The congregation was gathered 20 deep around the front steps to hear the words of the guest speaker, whose name the chapel would bear, who had risen to great heights here and fallen to great depths but who, through it all, had never stopped loving and had never stopped being loved: H. Gordon Weekley, Jr.

He returned many other times to help Associate Pastor Bo Prosser conduct the funerals of elderly Providence Baptist members. In addition, he attended Sunday services just to show he still cared and loved that place called Providence. Just after midnight on New Year's Day in 1996, he and his third wife, Jacqueline, were married in the H. Gordon Weekley Chapel.

Then came that tragic November 16, 1998, announcement that he had died in Asheville from alcohol intoxication. Gordon Weekley's funeral service was held at Providence at 2:00 pm on November 21, 1998, to a standing-room-only crowd. Key speakers and participants in the service were: Mayor Richard Vinroot, Arthur Smith, Rev. Grady Faulk and Bishop Charlene Kammerer. It was a fitting tribute to the man and his ministry of love.

The simplest, most powerful lesson to be learned from Gordon Weekley's life and death was given by his son, Steve, when he said: *We're all just human beings, broken vessels. Yet God chose us to deliver His message.....He didn't use angels. He didn't write it in the sky. Just you and me. That's quite an honor.*

Following the shock of Gordon Weekley's sudden resignation on November 18, 1967, Providence leaders quickly realized that they had to fill the void. Minister of Education Dean Kaufman filled the pulpit for three Sundays, beginning on November 19. Missionary Bill Andrews preached on December 10. This gave the deacons time to make plans and begin the process of searching for a new pastor.

The annual Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for World Missions was held December 3-10, 1967, with the theme, "Life Through His Name" from John 20:31. The guest speaker was Rev. Bill Andrews, missionary to Chile. The Providence offering goal was \$3,550.

On December 17, the Music Ministry presented Handel's "Messiah." The guest soloists were: Ramona Miller, soprano from Myers Park Methodist; Martha Beeson, alto from Providence Baptist; J. D. Morrison, bass from Park Road Baptist and Albert McClanahan, tenor from St. John's Baptist. John Sanders, Providence Minister of Music, directed the cantata.

The 1967 year concluded with a Christmas Eve Service in the church parking lot around a roaring bonfire. It was a festive occasion with carol singing, fellowship and refreshments. The year ended with the resignation of Organist Celeste Needy, who became the Organist for Providence Methodist Church in January.

During Pastor Weekley's absence in 1967, the following guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile

Rev. B. C. Fisher, Ex. Secy, Council on Christian Higher Ed.

Rev. Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education

Mrs. Fred Propst, Home Missions Specialist, Atlanta

Dr. George Redding, Bible Prof., Georgetown College, KY

Dr. Wm. H. Williams, Pastor Emeritus, Pritchard Memorial

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

The 1968 Providence church year began on January 7 with the election of a seven-member Pulpit Committee: Harry Brown, Paul

Godfrey, Bryce Iley, Herman Kissiah, Cleve Whatley, Mary Ann Crouch and Dorothy Smith. Paul Godfrey was elected as chair. In addition, it was announced that Joe Lammer of Queens College would serve as organist for the month of January.

In a called conference on January 14, the church approved a budget of \$163,000, the largest in Providence's history. This figure did not include the Special Growth Fund designated for the new church construction project. In addition, the church treasurer reported that the 1967 budget of \$160,000 had reached \$166,019.

January 19-21 was Christian Home Emphasis Week. The guest speaker for the workshop was Dr. Joe Burton, Editor of the *Home Life Magazine* in Nashville, Tennessee.

On January 31, Providence celebrated the ninth anniversary of service by Beulah Smith and the first anniversary of Louise Fowler. Karen McCarty, one of Providence's own members, joined the Music Ministry as Organist on February 4. That same day the Pulpit Committee distributed a Prospective Pastor Recommendation Form to solicit names and input from church members.

February began with the Brotherhood Sweetheart Banquet with guest speaker Doug Mayes, WBT/WBTV news personality. The majority of the month was consumed by the search for an interim pastor, the growing work of the Pulpit Committee and the Building Committee. On February 28, it was announced that the final building plans would be completed by the end of March and the bidding process with potential contractors would begin by April 1.

It was announced that Bill and Connie Andrews, Providence's missionary family to Chile, would leave on March 2. Bill Andrews preached on February 25, and the congregation attended a reception in their honor that night. At the reception it was announced that the Judson Lennons of Thailand would take up residence in Providence's missionary house on Hunter Lane about August 1.

March 1968 began with the annual Bible Study Course centered around the Gospel of Luke. It was a graded course with guest speakers for all ages. Dr. Bob Jackson, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dalton, Georgia, was the guest teacher for the adults.

During the week of March 3-10, the WMU led the church in the annual Week of Prayer for Home Missions, which culminated in the Annie Armstrong Offering. The guest speaker was Dr. Wendell

Belew of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. The Providence offering goal was \$1,116.81.

The March 7, 1968 *Pastorgram* carried the announcement that Oscar Whitescarver, former Minister of Education, had been ordained to the gospel ministry. Dr. Grady Wilson preached his Ordination Sermon. Oscar would soon enter the New Orleans Baptist Seminary to pursue his ministerial degree.

Much of Providence's attention during March was centered around the Growth Fund. The funds were coming in slowly, and the church leadership was concerned that banks would be hesitant to make such a large loan without a strong commitment from the congregation.

April 1968 began with two Music Ministry specials. On April 7, an Easter concert entitled "Reflections of the Crucifixion" was presented by the Sanctuary Choir under the direction of John Sanders, Minister of Music, and accompanied by Karen McCarty. On April 11, there was a Maundy Thursday Candlelight Observance of the Lord's Supper and concert by the Belmont College Men's Glee Club from Nashville, Tennessee, directed by Robert Mulloy.

On April 10, the Building Committee announced that the final architectural plans had been received from the Hawkins firm and would be let out to potential construction companies on April 15 for bids. The deadline for bids was May 15.

The new Carmel Baptist Church dedication was at 3:00 pm on April 21. A special invitation was issued to all Providence members to attend and share in an open house following the dedication.

April 1968 was a big transfer month for Providence deacons and their families. Five deacons were transferred: E. C. Andrews, Jim Hayes, Bill Crawley, Charlie Patterson and David Bodenhamer – all work/business related.

In a special called conference on April 21, the church was told by the Finance Committee that banks could not, by law, loan the church the large sum of money (\$500,000-\$600,000) needed to begin construction. In addition to the Growth Fund total of about \$300,000, Providence needed another \$250,000 to secure long-term bank financing. The Finance Committee proposed to the congregation that church members loan the church the \$250,000 at 6% interest until long-term financing could be secured. The

congregation responded with a unanimous vote. What a measure of faith these people provided!

On April 24, the Pulpit Committee announced that they were ready to talk with the first man on their list of potential candidates for pastor. On May 1, the church received a letter from the Bill Andrews family thanking the members for their hospitality and support for the Chile mission field. They expected to reach Valparaiso, Chile, around April 18.

The May 8, 1968, *Pastorgram* announced that the Together-We-Build-Fund had reached \$68,500 of the needed \$250,000 to begin construction. It also stated that the property next to the church, 15 acres and the house, was available if the church could take advantage of the opportunity to purchase it.

The 14th Anniversary Homecoming was held on May 19. As the *Pastorgram* stated: *Homecoming is a time when the old and the new members can get better acquainted and realize that we are in this job together. It is when we are united that Christ's program is extended more and more.*

The vesper hour on May 19 was a Choir Recognition Service with the program being given by the five youth choirs: Vesper Boys, Bethlehem, Carol, Handbell and Vesper Girls. It was a beautiful, spirit-filled evening of hymns and sacred music.

In a called conference on June 2, 1968, the church voted to purchase the Stewart property adjacent to the church property for \$100,000. Again, the church members were asked to commit loans and gifts totaling \$100,000 to be repaid with interest. The only major question asked before the members voted in favor of the purchase was *what will we do with so much land?* They agreed that that question could wait for future discussion.

The annual Vacation Bible School was held June 17-21, 1968. It was a very successful school. Most of June was occupied with vacations, the work of the Pulpit Committee and starting the building program. The last big event in June was the church-wide fellowship held on June 30.

On July 3, it was announced that Rev. and Mrs. Judson Lennon, missionaries to Thailand, would be arriving in mid-August to live in the Hunter Lane house while on leave.

On July 17, the General Building Committee announced that all the contractor bids had been rejected because they exceeded all expectations of the committee. The bids would be let as soon as more Growth Fund pledges had been collected and long-term financing secured.

In July 1968, two church members received special recognition. Selby Daniels was voted top salesman for his company and received a trip for two to Europe. Bobby Jones received an invitation to Knoxville, Tennessee, to participate in the Junior Olympics.

August was rather slow with completion of vacations, preparations for the new school year and raising funds for the building project. However, that changed on August 25 when the Pulpit Committee announced that the man they were recommending for the new pastor would preach at the vesper hour, and a vote would be taken following the service. As the church bulletin stated:

We urge your presence in such an important matter. No individual calls a pastor. The church extends the call to the man to become the undershepherd. You are the church. Your participation in the service tonight is anticipated.

The September 4, 1968, **Pastorgram** contained the following announcement:

Not often in the life of a church does it have the privilege as well as the responsibility of calling a pastor as the undershepherd. On Sunday night, August 25, 1968, as a church we exercised that privilege in extending a call to the Reverend William Henry Crouch of Winston-Salem.

On August 27, a telegram was received by Herman Kissiah as follows:

With anticipation and enthusiasm we accept your call effective October 1. We request your prayerful preparation for our coming. Joining you in a great adventure in faith.

Henry and Jan Crouch

Henry Crouch, a native of North Carolina, was born in Hickory as the eldest son of Dr. and Mrs. Perry Crouch. In 1968, Dr. Crouch was the Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. Henry was educated in the public schools of Morganton, Raleigh, Fayetteville and Asheville. He was a graduate

of Mars Hill College and earned a B. A. Degree from Wake Forest University. He was also a graduate of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, receiving the Bachelor of Divinity Degree in 1953 and the Master of Theology Degree in 1954. In addition, he did graduate work in educational administration at the University of Louisville and attended the Institute of Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary during the summers of 1959 and 1960. He also earned a certificate in counseling from the School of Pastoral Care at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital and a certificate from the management seminar of the School of Business Administration at Wake Forest University.

Jan, his wife, was the former Janice Young of Asheville, and she played an active role in all aspects of church life. She was active in the Baptist Pastors' Wives Association of North Carolina and served as President. In addition, she was active in community projects in Jackson, Mississippi, and Winston-Salem. She attended Wake Forest University from 1947-1949 and held a B. A. Degree in creative painting from the University of Louisville (1951). She was an excellent portrait painter and loved to try her hand at anything creative.

The Crouches had four children: Bill (17), Debbie (15), Tom (13) and Sarah (10). They also had a foster daughter, Mrs. Victor Hobbs, in Rome Georgia, where her husband worked for the Rehabilitation Department of the State of Georgia. They also had one grandson, Joel, age 2.

The Crouches came to Providence from Winston-Salem and the Ardmore Baptist Church where he had been Pastor for nine years. Prior to Ardmore, he held a pastorate in Jackson, Mississippi.

Minister of Music John Sanders announced on September 11 that the seven children's choirs would organize and begin the new church year on September 15. The announcement stated that there is a two-fold purpose in a church's choral program. The first is religious education affecting the singers themselves. The second purpose reverses the direction of service with choral groups reaching out to beautify and strengthen the church's ministry.

Minister of Education Dean Kaufman announced on September 15 that the church kindergarten program would be working with the

boys and girls of the uptown Griertown community. They would be brought to Providence on the Jolly Green Giant for this mission project under the supervision of Mrs. Mercer Wilson, the church Community Missionary. This was the fourth year of the program of outreach to the community.

The September 18, 1968, *Pastorgram* announced that Minister of Music John Sanders had tendered his resignation effective October 1. His desire was to devote full-time to his public school music ministry.

Henry and Jan Crouch moved to Charlotte during the week of September 25. His first official day as Pastor of Providence Baptist Church was October 1. During the vesper hour on October 6, a reception honored the Crouches. Invited to participate in the reception were all the Baptist pastors in the Mecklenburg Association, pastors from the neighboring churches and the civic leaders of the community. Church members were encouraged to be present sometime during the evening to greet the Crouches. Mrs. E. B. Vosburgh, Jr. and her Reception Committee did a marvelous job.

In the October 9, 1968 *Pastorgram*, Rev. Crouch responded as follows, *How gracious you have been to the Crouch family. We pause to thank you for every thoughtful gesture.* At the 83rd Annual Session of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association on October 24, he was presented as one of the new pastors in the association. The October 16 *Pastorgram* contained the following telegram from Gordon Weekley:

With a multitude of glorious and happy memories for 13 wonderful years, I rejoice to send my assurance of fervent and continuing prayers that God will bestow His richest blessings on the congregation and new pastor as you are joined together in these first days of Henry Crouch's ministry as Providence's second pastor.

One of Henry Crouch's first changes at Providence was to request that the youth lead the Sunday vesper hour. The Chapel Choir would provide the singing support and two young people would participate. The objective was to give them opportunities to develop as worship leaders.

The 1969 church budget was presented to the congregation on November 3 for discussion and approval. The proposed budget was

\$200,000, an increase of \$37,000 over the 1968 budget. It was presented to the church as the *MUST budget if we are to move out... ..we must show our intentions by our stewardship.*

The annual Community Thanksgiving Service was held at Providence United Methodist on November 27. This was Henry Crouch's first opportunity in Charlotte to be a part of community witness.

Rev. Crouch made his second change as Pastor on November 7 when he announced that each week there would be a deacon-on-call to assist with the Sunday worship services, be ready to visit with the pastor on emergency calls at night and anxious to help any members who might call. Harry Brown, the deacon chair, was the first called into action.

The leadership and congregation were a little apprehensive as Pledge Day approached on November 24. The proposed budget of \$200,000, the Growth Fund for Construction, and the Stewart Property Fund were stretching members financially. The question was *Would faith and commitment prevail?* The December 11 **Pastorgram** announced that pledges and estimated pledges had pushed the total over the \$200,000 proposed budget – "Victory was in the air!"

The Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held December 1-8, 1968, with guest speakers Rev. and Mrs. Zeb Moss, missionaries from Zambia. The Providence Lottie Moon offering goal was \$3,550.

The Christmas music program was presented by the Adult Choirs of Carmel Baptist and Providence Baptist on Sunday evening, December 15, directed by Martha Iley (Carmel) and H. Y. Simerson (Providence). The cantata entitled "Before the Paling of the Stars" was by David H. Williams. Soloists were Mrs. Clyde Burke, Bryan Coates, Mrs. J. B. Taylor and Mrs. Don Hill. Joel Harrison was the guest organist. The vesper hour service on December 22 was a Christmas music program presented by the Vesper Girls' Choir directed by Martha Iley. The evening concluded with the annual Candlelight Service featuring selections by the Senior High Handbell Choir directed by Mrs. Bryan Coates and Mrs. Dean Kaufman. It was a beautiful, spiritually enriching service.

The year 1968 concluded with the December 29 vesper hour service conducted by Providence's college students, home for the holidays. Jimmy Pope presided, and the talks, entitled "Making Him Known," were given by Linda Wilson, Jeanne Hyman, Cindy Byrum, Howard Nicholson and Jay Andrews.

During the absence of a pastor in 1968, the following guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile

Dr. Wendell Belew, Home Missions Board of the Southern Baptist Convention

Dr. Nathan Brooks, Jr., Director of Church Programs, North Carolina Baptist Convention

Rev. Joe Burnette, Associate Pastor, First Baptist Church

Dr. Joe Burton, Editor, *Home Life Magazine*

Dr. James Carlin, Professor of Religion, Wingate College

Rev. F. Crossly Morgan, Retired Pastor, Concord

Dr. Perry Crouch, Executive Secretary, North Carolina Baptist Convention and father of Henry Crouch

Mr. W. B. Fincher, Charlotte Businessman and member of Green Memorial Baptist Church

Mr. W. T. Harris, Charlotte Businessman, Christian Layman

Dr. L. D. Johnson, Chaplain, Furman University

Rev. Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education

Rev. John W. Long, Pastor, Tabernacle Baptist, New Bern

Dr. Don Moore, Pastoral Care Professor, Southeastern Baptist Seminary

Dr. Kemp Neal, Supply Pastor for Presbyterian Churches, Myrtle Beach, SC

Dr. Philip Rodgeron, Associate Secretary, Department of Evangelism, Virginia Baptist Convention

The January 1, 1969, *Pastorgram* announced that Dr. Grady Wilson was leaving to join the Billy Graham Team en route to Crusades in the Far East. It also stated that the annual Bible Study Course would be February 9-13 on the book of Isaiah with guest teacher Dr. John Lewis, Pastor, First Baptist Church of Raleigh.

In the January 5, 1969 church bulletin, Pastor Crouch informed the congregation of "anticipated changes" that he would like to see:

We anticipate 1969 being 'our year' to grow and mature. Our physical plant should see some radical changes as our long dreamed of building becomes a reality. Ground breaking could come by March.

Our church program may take on new dimensions. A new club for young couples is anticipated. New emphasis on the regular teaching and training programs should be expected. The possibility of a new ministry in music looms big in the new year plans.

Outreach into the Charlotte area should be our goal. Inner city missions and Boy's Town are among the possibilities.

What about a radio program beaming our witness? Membership should climb as visitation and participation grows. We have marked time for several years and now all systems point to 'go.'

Church membership on January 1, 1969, was 1,206. Sunday School enrollment was 1,185, with an average attendance of 460. Training Union enrollment was 233, with an average attendance of 115.

In early January the committee, chaired by Russ Tucker appointed to study the future uses of the 15 acres of property purchased from the Stewart family, recommended two options for the church to consider. The first option was to sell back portions not needed for future church expansion. The second recommendation was to let the Crouch family rent the Stewart house for \$200 a month since it was not suitable for education space. Tucker also stated that the final payment to the Stewarts was due on February 20, and the church was still short of funds to make the payment.

On January 19, the Vesper Girls' Choir directed by Martha Iley presented a music program at the Methodist Rest Home. The program was a part of their regular worship service.

A severe parking space problem was repeatedly discussed during the early part of 1969. The church staff encouraged more 11:00 am worship attendees to come at 8:30 am, which would leave more spaces for visitors, who normally came for the 11:00 am service. However, to some, this was a positive problem.

Sunday, February 2, was scheduled in over 15,000 Southern Baptist churches as the 39th Annual Baptist Men's Day. The object was to emphasize the need of men for their faithfulness and value to their churches. At both morning services, the guest speaker was Dr. Robert Perry Crouch, the younger brother of the pastor. Dr. Crouch was a renowned thoracic and vascular surgeon in Asheville. He was also a deacon and Sunday School teacher at the First Baptist Church in Asheville.

On February 4, the annual WMU Mission Study and dinner were held. The course, "In Aloha Land," for men and women was taught by Mrs. Judson Lennon, Providence's resident and on-leave missionary from Thailand.

The February 12 *Pastorgram* announced that Pastor Crouch had performed a special wedding on February 8 in the sanctuary. He united his father and Mrs. Charles Maddrey of Richmond, Virginia, in marriage. Dr. W. Perry Crouch was the Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention.

From February 14-16, 1969, Lowell Dotson visited as a prospective staff member to fill the position of Minister of Music. Lowell was a graduate of Mars Hill College and Appalachian State University. He had served as Minister of Music in Lincolnton, Hickory and Louisville. In addition, he was to receive his degree in Church Music in May from the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville. He and wife, Sally, both did their practice teaching in Charlotte and were the parents of two boys, ages 4 and 2.

In called conference on February 23, the church was asked to vote in favor of changing the annual promotion date from the first Sunday in October to the first Sunday in July. There was a heated discussion, but the majority voted in favor of the change, beginning in July 1969.

March 2-9, 1969, was the Week of Prayer for Home Missions with guest speaker Rev. Danny Griffin, Pastor of Wilmont Baptist Church. His topic was "Mission Possibilities in Charlotte." The Annie Armstrong Home Mission Offering goal was \$1,200.

During the March 9 vesper hour, the East Mecklenburg High School Choir presented a sacred music concert directed by Charles Starnes, former Providence Minister of Music. Several members were choir participants.

On March 5, 1969, the Building Committee reported that the building plans had been delayed again for two reasons: First, state law put a limit of 6% on loans to churches, and banks would not loan the large sum Providence needed and, second, the church's capacity to pay. In March, the church budget was running a large deficit. Stewardship had to increase if Providence's dream was to come true.

In conference on March 23, the church called Lowell Dotson to be Providence's first full-time Minister of Music. In a letter dated March 25, 1969, the Dotsons responded as follows: *We accept your call and are looking forward to the Sunday when we unite formally with Providence.....May I stress the word 'togetherness' since it serves as the basis of my church music philosophy.* Lowell Dotson began his ministry at Providence on July 1, 1969.

For the Easter cantata on March 30, the Sanctuary Choir presented "No Greater Love" by John W. Peterson. The soloists were Chris Doyle, Jeff Walker, Bryan Coates, Norma Jean Burke and Jerry Payseur. The cantata was directed by Interim Music Director Bert Simerson. The organist was Ruth Barrett and the narrator was Rev. Crouch.

April 1969 began with the WMU General Meeting with guest speaker Rev. David Wilkinson, Chaplain at Presbyterian Hospital. This was followed on April 8 by the WMU of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association which met at Pritchard Memorial Baptist. Mrs. Auris Pender, missionary to China, Hawaii and Singapore, and Miss Lida Warren, State YWA Director, were the guest speakers.

The April 16 **Pastorgram** announced that in 1968 Providence gave \$20,045 to the North Carolina Cooperative Program. Another \$4,061.33 was given through special offerings, giving a total of \$24,107.29. The 1969 budget called for Providence to give \$30,000.

During 1969, three Providence students received special recognition. Debbie Iley and Andrea Simerson were invited to attend the Governor's School during the summer. Max Harris Jr. received an award for winning the Associational Memory Work Program.

In May 1969, Providence joined the new Mecklenburg Baptist Metropolitan Ministries which was designed to encourage all

Baptist churches to participate in a program of cooperative Christian mission action for the region. It would include black and white churches, associational and independent Baptist congregations.

The two major events of May were the annual Homecoming and dinner-on-the-grounds on May 18 and the quest to find adequate long-term financing for the building program that had been delayed for nearly two years. Homecoming was a huge success with over 500 members and guests participating. The called church conference, also on May 18, to consider a bond program for financing the new building was a shock to those who participated. Financing was finally secured through Security Church Finance, Inc. for an issue of \$800,000 of first mortgage bonds to be repaid over 15 years at 6.5% interest. The bonds were to be sold by church members with assistance from Security Church Finance. The repayment schedule was \$6,000 per month for the first year and \$7,150 per month for years 2-15. To meet this figure, monthly giving would have to increase by over \$2,000. June 22-29 was designated as Bond Week to prepare church members to make personal bond purchases and plan to sell bonds to nonchurch members. The bonds were scheduled to arrive on July 1.

The May 28 *Pastorgram* announced that Lowell Dotson had finished his recital and would receive the Master of Church Music Degree on May 30. It also stated that Laura Kissiah would receive a Master's Degree in Organ and Church Music on May 30 from Southern Baptist Seminary. Laura also received the Honor Award in Organ and was voted by the faculty as being the Most Outstanding Student in the School of Music.

The annual Vacation Bible School was held June 16-20, 1969. All students from kindergarten through sixth grade were encouraged to participate.

In a special business session on June 8, 1969, the church voted to accept a negotiated bid with the R. H. Wheatley Construction Company for \$699,600 for the new construction. Sunday, June 15, was a special day at Providence. The Ground Breaking Ceremony was held at 10:40 am with church members, the architect, Teebee Hawkins and contractor, R. H. Wheatley, all turning soil at the

building site to symbolically start construction. Actual construction began the week of June 22.

The June 11 *Pastorgram* announced that Bryce Iley would be the general chair of the Bond Drive and that Ed Haire would serve as the co-chair. A team of over 125 sales persons would be available for the June 22-29 sales campaign.

June 1969 ended with the Mission Trip to the North, composed of 11 teenagers and 3 adults. Their object was the Pioneer Mission Territory in New Jersey and Pennsylvania where they would help in Bible Schools and erect a church building.

Lowell Dotson began his work as Minister of Music on July 1. As a part of the ministerial staff, he would function in other roles in addition to music. As a part of his first service on July 6, he sang a solo entitled "Let Us Break Bread Together."

The July 2 *Pastorgram* stated that the Bond Drive during the first week got off to a "snail's pace" and that a renewed effort was needed to achieve success. It also carried the announcement that Dr. Grady Wilson had been elected to the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

During the week of July 6, Pastor Crouch was in New York City for study at Union Theological Seminary. In his absence on July 13, his father, Dr. W. Perry Crouch, Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, filled the pulpit. At the vesper hour, Rev. Dean Kaufman and the teenagers gave a report on the Mission Trip North to New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Providence gained possession of the 15-acre Stewart property on August 15, 1969, and the house was remodeled for the Crouch family residence. The garage apartment was made into a study for the pastor. With the church's assistance, the Crouches moved into the house the week of August 27.

Most of August entailed raising funds, completing vacations, supervising the construction program and adjusting to the new July Promotion Day schedule. By the end of August, Lowell Dotson announced the formation of eight choirs with their directors. The church Music Ministry was filled with a new burst of enthusiasm.

The August 20 *Pastorgram* announced that Rev. Theo Patnaik, who had been ordained at Providence, was a missionary appointee working with internationals in California. Rev. Patnaik, a graduate of

the Golden Gate Seminary, was working under the direction of the Southern Baptist Department of Language Missions.

September 1969 began with two special events. The first was the September 14 Ordination Service for Lowell Dotson, the new Minister of Music. Two special guest ministers for the Ordination Service were Ed Echerd, Jr., charter member, and R. M. Hagler, former Associate Minister. The second event was the September 17 Prayer Meeting Service conducted by Dr. Arthur B. Rutledge, the Executive Secretary of the Home Mission Board.

The week of September 17 was State Missions Emphasis Week. The state-wide goal was \$250,000 to be divided among a variety of needs and projects. The guest speaker was Rev. Roy J. Smith, Secretary of the Town and Country Seminary Extension Department of the North Carolina State Baptist Convention.

The September 1969 *Pastorgram* announced that Mrs. Brenda Matthews had been called to be the church Organist effective October 1. She came from Plaza Baptist Church and would replace the Interim Organist, Mrs. Loretta Short, who had supplied many times in the past. The *Pastorgram* also stated that 35 new members had joined Providence during the first three weeks of September.

September 1969 concluded with the Final Bond Drive Effort and the announcement by Lowell Dotson that on September 28, a Providence Men's Chorus would be formed. It would be a hymn choir, and they would sing for church services once a month.

The first October event was an adult social with the theme, "Westward Ho" on October 3. The October 1 *Pastorgram* announced that the church had approved selling the Hunter Lane house. The proceeds would be used to pay the balance on the mortgage and the remainder spent on church needs. October also marked Rev. Crouch's first anniversary as pastor.

On October 12, 1969, the church was asked to approve a 1970 budget of \$250,000, an increase of \$50,000. The major changes from the 1969 budget were the debt service to cover the new building and the full-time Minister of Music position. As the October 8 *Pastorgram* stated: *This will be a difficult year and our adventure in Faith will be successful if we are faithful to our God.* Joe White was selected to lead the church in the 1970 Stewardship Campaign, and November 16 was designated as

Pledge Sunday.

The week of November 2, 1969, was Mission Study Week with guest speaker Rev. Joe Burnette, Associate Pastor, First Baptist Church. His subject was "Sons of Ishmal—How Shall They Hear?" The annual Choir Dedication Service followed on November 9.

During the week of November 5, it was announced that Arthur Smith had received the Southern Seminary Foundation Award in Louisville for the Layman of the Year. The award was presented annually to a layman who had best integrated the Christian message into his public life. Arthur gave his testimony to a full house at the award ceremony. Other Providence members receiving honors in November were: Dorothy Smith appointed to the Board of Children's Home, Conrad Bridges appointed to the Wingate College Board of Trustees, and Charles Myers appointed to the North Carolina Hospital Board.

Stewardship Chair Joe White announced on November 19 that the 1970 budget had been pledged. Members, with many pledge cards still out, had pledged nearly \$252,000 – Victory had been achieved!

The week of November 24, 1969, was the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions with the theme, "In the Power of His Spirit," with guest speaker Dr. Howard Knight, missionary to South America. The Southern Baptist goal for the Lottie Moon Offering was \$16,000,000 and the Providence goal was \$3,900.

On November 30, it was announced that Miss Patricia Daniels, Secretary to the pastor and Receptionist, had resigned. The church expressed its appreciation for her good work and wished her every success for the future.

The Christmas music program was held on Sunday, December 14. The Sanctuary Choir presented a cantata entitled "The Holy Night" by John H. Brewer. It began with a string quartet offertory, "Greensleeves," by Walton. The cantata soloists were: Norma Jean Burke (soprano), Maxine Dunn (alto), Bryan Coates (tenor) and Bert Simerson (bass). A quartet composed of Sandra Pfaff (soprano), Florine Marren (alto), Jeff Walker (tenor) and Buddy Gaffney (bass) also participated. Minister of Music Lowell Dotson directed the cantata, and Geneal Heatherly was the Organist.

A special Christmas service by the combined Music Ministry was presented at the December 21 vesper hour entitled "The Music of Christmas." Ten choirs participated in a spectacular performance of popular and sacred Christmas music under the direction of Lowell Dotson. Geneal Heatherly was the Organist and Grace Tillotson the Pianist. The evening climaxed with the annual Candlelight Service.

On December 21, Providence welcomed Geneal Heatherly as the new church Organist. At the time, she was employed by Myers Park Baptist Church as Secretary to Dr. Eugene Owens.

The December 24 *Pastorgram* announced that Ed Haire had been chosen as Chairman of Baptist Metropolitan Ministries, the newly formed mission action group among Charlotte Baptists. Providence was one of the charter members of the new organization whose purpose was to focus on the mission needs of a growing metropolis. The announcement also stated that E. R. Echerd, Jr., former member and former Superintendent of Missions in Mecklenburg County, would be the first director of this new ministry, beginning January 1, 1970.

During the absence of Pastor Crouch in 1969, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. W. Perry Crouch, Executive Secretary, North Carolina Baptist Convention

Rev. Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education

Rev. Howard C. Knight, Missionary to South America

Rev. Judson Lennon, Missionary to Thailand

Dr. Timothy Pennell, Foreign Mission Board Medical Doctor

Rev. Roy J. Smith, Secretary of Town and Country Seminary Extension Department, North Carolina Baptist Convention

Rev. Dwayne Zimmer, Minister of Education, Tampa Baptist Church



Chapter 3

The 1970s

Nationally Vietnam, during the 1970s, continued to be the primary concern of Presidents Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter. Johnson Americanized the war; Nixon spent considerable energy trying to end the war without losing it, and Carter struggled with the postwar consequences of defeat. Nixon decreased the combat role in Vietnam while moving toward détente with the Soviet Union and China. He felt that these actions in Third World disputes would protect American interests. Carter sought to reverse the deterioration of American influence in the Third World and to continue détente, but the 1979-80 Iranian hostage crisis and a flare-up in Soviet-American relations dashed most of his hopes and returned the world to a frigid Cold War.

Throughout the 1970s, Americans became uneasy not only about the troubled position of the United States in world affairs but also about the disorder wrought at home by foreign entanglements. Foreign policy and domestic developments had been traditionally interconnected, and foreign policy had always sprung from the domestic setting of the nation – its needs, wants, moods and ideals. Yet, the Vietnam War experience called into question those needs, wants, moods and ideals, because a majority of Americans came to see the effects of the war as a threat to their economic well-being, social stability and political system. By 1980, Americans had not reached a consensus about the lessons of Vietnam, but fearing America's slippage from its high world rank, they were eager to restore its preeminence and repair their own frayed society.

From a domestic perspective, the 1970s saw Americans turn inward and concentrate on self-expression and personal

improvements. As a popular commercial proclaimed, *You only go 'round once in life and you've got to grab for all the gusto you can get*. That gusto ranged from recreational vehicles to roller skates, disco to punk rock, The Godfather to Star Wars. Social commentator Tom Wolfe branded the 1970s as the "Me Decade," a time of diversion and material consumption designed to make Americans' private worlds, in the midst of public confusion, at least tolerable.

In 1970, Charlotte's population was 241,000 with continued movement (urban-sprawl) into the county (355,000) and beyond. At the same time, Charlotte was serving as a magnet for outlying areas for banking and finance, cultural events, entertainment, health care services, and transportation.

For most Charlotteans the 1970s were a free-spirited, anything goes mind-set of the hippie culture and Woodstock era. It was the era of the "wide look:" wide Afros, wide bottoms and wide-open basketball led by the ACC and the Carolina Cougars ABA Franchise. The Cougars competed with the NBA from 1969 to 1974 and introduced the red, white and blue ball, the three-point shot and dunk contest.

The 1970s also brought several major changes to downtown Charlotte. In 1973, the Charlotte Civic Center was completed at East Trade and College Streets. In 1974, the 40-story NCNB Tower, tallest building between Philadelphia and Atlanta, opened on the Southeast corner of Trade and Tryon Streets. Next came the Radisson Plaza next-door to the NCNB Tower.

At Providence, 1970 began with a Watch Night Service to bring in the New Year. Mrs. Gerard (Susan) Davidson was hired to be Rev. Crouch's new Secretary to make all the pastor's appointments and keep the church calendar. Susan came with much experience as an Executive Secretary in the Charlotte area.

Church membership on January 1, 1970, was 1,351. Sunday School enrollment was 1,297 with an average attendance of 725, and Training Union enrollment was 301 with an average attendance of 189.

The January 4 church bulletin announced that Dr. Amos Bumgardner, a charter member and early leader, had recently rejoined the church by letter from St. John's Baptist Church. It was good to have him back.

The annual Bible Study Course on the book of James was taught January 18-21 with Dr. T. C. Smith, Professor of Religion at Furman University, as guest speaker. Dr. Smith was known as one of the outstanding New Testament scholars in the Southern Baptist Convention.

In January 1970, Providence was deeply involved in two local mission projects: First, the new Baptist Metropolitan Ministries in which Ed Haire was chairman and Rev. Ed Eckerd, Jr. was director and, second, the Highland Elementary School where Cleo Gullick, a Providence member, was principal. Nearly 50 Providence women spent time on Wednesdays and Thursdays helping with the students.

Sunday, January 25, was Baptist Men's Day with the theme, "What Men Can Do." The men conducted the vesper service with Deacon Chair Bill Eison presiding and Bert Simerson leading the men's chorus in the special music. On January 26, a "new phase" of Providence ministry began with the formation of a Royal Ambassadors Chapter for fourth, fifth and sixth grade boys. This would be a special program of missionary education, recreation, sports, outings and spiritual growth for the boys.

January closed with the announcement that Jack B. Upton, a long-time church member, leader and deacon, had passed away. He would be fondly remembered.

February began with the annual WMU Study Course entitled "Mission Study of the Northeast," taught by Rev. Dean Kaufman. A key part of his course was showing active church members at work in some of these areas.

Much of February was taken up with the regular church programs and the building program, but the main concern was the growing budget deficit and how to get members to maintain and increase their giving.

The Annie Armstrong Home Missions Week of Prayer was March 2-8 with the theme, "Lord, Speak Through Me." The guest speaker was Dr. Ed Carter, Secretary of the Department of Christian Social Ministries of the Home Mission Board in Atlanta. The Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$6,000,000 and the Providence goal was \$1,320, an average of \$10 per family.

The Easter music program on March 22 was "The Crucifixion" by John Stainer. The Sanctuary Choir was directed by Lowell Dotson,

and the organist was Larry Wilson from Queens College. The soloists were: Thomas Cole (tenor, Winthrop College), Lowell Dotson (baritone), George Davis (bass) and Bert Simerson (bass).

The March 25 **Pastorgram** reported that the South Mecklenburg High School basketball team had won the State 4-A Title, with Providence's Bobby Jones providing the height and skill for victory. For his efforts, Bobby earned All State Honors for the second year in a row.

The annual church revival was April 5-8, 1970, with a new feature being added. All the school children and businessmen were encouraged to meet at 7:15 am for a light breakfast and brief worship service prior to starting the day. The guest revivalist was Dr. R. F. Smith, Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Durham, and Lowell Dotson led the singing.

On April 1, 1970, the church still had \$158,000 in unsold bonds. In order to get the church men to move forward and sell these bonds, a free B-Day Banquet and sales seminar was held on April 17. Committee Chair Ed Haire issued the call with the words of the astronauts on Apollo 13 who calmly announced to Houston control: *We've got a problem here!*

The May 6 **Pastorgram** reported that Finance Secretary Beulah Smith had resigned after 11 years of service. During those 11 years, she had made many contributions to the Providence ministry. The same **Pastorgram** stated that Rev. Crouch had been asked by WBTV to be a participant for 10 weeks on its Saturday afternoon *Pastor Face Your Questions Show*. The program had wide appeal throughout the Charlotte area.

The May 20 **Pastorgram** announced Providence's 16th Anniversary Homecoming. As Rev. Crouch said: *Our Homecoming and Anniversary Sunday will give us a chance to reflect, ponder, be appreciative for the past and for the past leadership, and provide us with a time to ask for future directions.*

The same **Pastorgram** stated that all the bonds had finally been sold. *'We are all Sold!' It was last Homecoming Day that we voted to sell \$800,000 worth of bonds. A very ambitious goal – well, Providence has done it again. A difficult task attempted and completed successfully.*

It was announced on May 20 that Providence member Patricia Ledford had been elected President of the North Carolina Association for Childhood Education, an honor well-deserved.

The annual Choir Recognition Service took place on Sunday, June 7, 1970, with all nine church choirs participating. The evening service featured the children's choirs and was a marvelous evening of sacred music and popular hymns.

June brought vacations, recreational activities and a deepening of the church budget deficit. Good weather permitted the construction program to move forward, which heightened the budget crisis. The new occupation date was scheduled for January 1, 1971.

On June 8, the church announced that Mrs. Phyllis Kramer had been hired as the new Financial Secretary to replace Beulah Smith. Vacation Bible School was June 22-26, and all children kindergarten age through junior high school were encouraged to participate.

The June 21 church bulletin listed as new members the Rev. and Mrs. William P. Andrews and their children who had returned from being missionaries to Chile. The same bulletin also announced that Promotion Day would be July 5 for all age groups, except the adults who would not be promoted until the new building was ready.

The June 28 vesper hour was designated as "Get To Know Your Neighbor" night. Rev. R. Herman Nicholson, the new Pastor of Providence Methodist Church, was the guest preacher.

The July 5 vesper hour guest preacher was Rev. John McGee, missionary to Nigeria and long-time friend of Providence. This was followed on July 8 by the annual Mission Endeavor Up North led by Rev. and Mrs. Dean Kaufman. Nineteen adults and teenagers went to Rome, New York, to conduct two mission Bible Schools, one in Floyd, New York, and the other in Bridgeport, New York.

Aubrey Arant and Ken Johnson announced that a new ball park would be built in the wooded area at the rear of the Stewart property with a picnic area beside it. This helped beautify the property.

July 15, 1970, marked Rev. Dean Kaufman's fifth anniversary as Minister of Education. As the *Pastorgram* stated: *These have been busy, interesting, frustrating and eventful years and Dean Kaufman surely was God's man for Providence. His faithful leadership during the interim period between pastors will not be forgotten!*

During 1970, the Providence men set aside Thursday nights for outreach ministry. Once a month they were in charge of the services at the Charlotte Rescue Mission, led by Jim Hayes. The other Thursdays during the month were devoted to church visitation.

A continuing Providence concern during the summer of 1970 was the growing budget deficit. All avenues of church communication regularly pleaded with the members to catch-up and maintain their financial commitment to the total church ministry.

September began with the announcement that Pastor and Mrs. Crouch would teach seminars during the Sunday Training Union hour to give adults options to train and study. The pastor's seminar was entitled *Contemporary Theology*, and Mrs. Crouch's was *Christianity and the Arts*. This was followed by the organization of the Music Ministry for the 1970-71 year. There were nine choirs led by Lowell Dotson and a team of volunteers.

In September, the Mecklenburg Baptist Association started a new television program, thanks to the influence of Arthur Smith and WCCB Channel 18. The devotional program, entitled "Let's Think It Over," came on daily at 7:55 am. Pastor Crouch was one of the first Baptist ministers to participate.

September was State Mission Offering Month for North Carolina Baptists with a state goal of \$250,000. Some of the special ministries were: Fruitland Bible Institute, Cherokee Child Care Center, City and Metropolitan Missions, Chaplaincy, Deaf Interracial Cooperation, Military Areas, and Brunt Swamp Field Work.

During 1970, Providence had two members on the Wingate College Board of Trustees – Henry Crouch and H. Conrad Bridges. The Board of Trustees honored Conrad by naming a new men's residence hall in his honor.

On Sunday, October 4, 1970, Providence began a new concept in organizational outreach — a Career Department for working singles. Until completion of the new building, the department met at the pastor's home with Mrs. Crouch and Jim Monhollon serving as the teachers. Shortly thereafter, a Better Homes Club was organized for couples ages 18-37, designed to help each person grow spiritually through Christian fellowship and development.

October was budget preparation and discussion month. On November 1, the church was asked to approve a 1971 budget of \$292,000, a substantial increase over the 1970 budget even though contributions were down. Victory Sunday was scheduled for November 22.

On November 1, the building contractor gave December 15 as the completion date for the new building. As a result, members were asked to catch-up on their Growth Fund Pledges. However, the completion was delayed, and the dedication was scheduled for January 17 with occupancy of the building to take place the first Sunday in February.

The annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was November 19-December 6, 1970. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was \$16,000,000, and the Providence goal was \$4,000. Special guest speakers from Africa were Rev. and Mrs. Bert Dyson, personal friends of the Kaufmans. The mission emphasis closed on December 27 when Dr. Grady Wilson (church member and member of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) preached the morning services.

The December 9 *Pastorgram* announced the resignation of Susan Davidson, the pastor's secretary, and expressed appreciation for the marvelous job she had done. Mrs. Geneal Heatherley, former church Organist, would be the new Secretary. Geneal had prior experience as an Executive Secretary in Charlotte and Raleigh.

On Sunday evening, December 13, the six youth choirs presented a beautiful concert of sacred and popular Christmas carols. At the December 20 vesper hour, the Sanctuary Choir gave a special seasonal program of Christmas music entitled "The Story of Christmas In Word and Song," directed by Lowell Dotson. The organist was Roye Lynn Kulik, and the service concluded with the annual Candlelight Service.

The December 30 *Pastorgram* stated that Mrs. Roye Lynn Kulik was the new church Organist. She held degrees in music from Oberlin Conservatory and the University of Southern California. In addition, she was an accomplished vocalist. Sympathy was expressed to Dr. Amos Bumgardner in the loss of his brother, Dr. Franklin Bumgardner, a charter member. The church used his cottage, The

Hut, as its first meeting place. At the time, two of his sons, John and Carl, were still members.

The year 1970 closed with the December 27 vesper hour program conducted by the college students and the New Year's Eve Watch Night Service – one of the “fun” highlights of the year.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1970, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following speakers:

Rev. Lawrence Childs, Jr., Superintendent of Missions,
Mecklenburg Baptist Association

Rev. Bert Dyson, Missionary to Nigeria

Dr. Ben Fisher, Executive Secretary, Southern Baptist
Education Commission

Dr. Bruce Heilman, President, Meredith College

Rev. John McGee, Missionary to Nigeria

Rev. R. Herman Nicholson, Pastor, Providence Methodist

Dr. R. F. Smith, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Durham

Dr. T. C. Smith, Religion Professor, Furman University

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

The 1971 church year began with four new seminars for adults: *Witnessing* taught by James Hayes, *The Baptist Deacon* taught by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Eison, *How to Study the Bible* taught by Austin Moody, and *Youth Leadership* taught by James Monhollon.

Church membership January 1, 1971, was 1,496. Sunday School enrollment was 1,327, with an average attendance of 675. Training Union enrollment was 233, with an average attendance of 195.

It was announced on January 10 that the new building would be open for the Dedication and Open House on February 21. On March 7, all adults would move into new areas for assembly and classes. The announcement closed with: *This should be another great day in the life of our church when, for the first time, every class will have a classroom, no meeting in the library, offices, etc.*

An interesting addition to the church ministry in the early 1970s was ceramic classes. They were planned and led by Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education, who was nationally known for his creative craft productions. This craft ministry proved to be a special time of Christian fellowship.

Sunday, January 24, was Baptist Men's Day with focus upon the role of laymen in the church ministry. Chip Kissiah, chair of the

deacons, presided, assisted by Bill Addenbrook, Jim Hayes, Austin Moody and Earl Pope.

On February 3, 1971, Lowell Dotson, Minister of Music, formed the first ladies Handbell Choir. The *Pastorgram* announced that the requirements to join were:

Good rhythm and coordination, the ability to read music, strong wrists, alertness and determination, pleasant personality and cooperative attitude and able to practice each week at a stated time.

The annual WMU Study Course began on February 2 with Mrs. Jim Monhollon teaching the book, *The Diakonia Task*. Diakonia was described as an *activity of helpfulness which Christians render their fellowmen in the love of Christ who makes them brothers.*

February 21, 1971, the long-awaited day, was set aside for the Dedication Service and Cornerstone Laying for the new building. It began during the 11:00 am worship service with Dr. James L. Sullivan, Executive Secretary of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention as the guest speaker. The actual Dedication Service began at 4:30 pm with a brief service in the new fellowship hall followed by the laying of the cornerstone outside and a tour of the new facilities. As the church bulletin stated: *We now participate in showing our friends and looking at the beautiful facilities that God has led us to build.*

Many esteemed persons shared in the Program of Dedication. Some of them were: Dr. Budd Smith, President of Wingate College; Dr. Carl Bates, President of the Southern Baptist Convention; Mr. W. T. Harris, Chair of the Board of County Commissioners, and Dr. Grady Wilson, church member and Billy Graham Team Member. It was a glorious day for all who attended.

March 7-14, 1971, was the Week of Prayer for Home Missions with guest speaker Rev. Bill Andrews, on leave from Chile. The Southern Baptist Convention goal for the Home Mission Offering was \$6,000,000, and the Providence goal was \$1,200. Ironically, Providence announced the church's participation in two Home Mission projects: First, meetings in the Sharon Road area on Sundays at 3:00 pm in the Mutual Savings and Loan Building which led to the founding of Sharon Baptist Church and, second, the annual Mission

North summer effort to Long Island, New York, where the youth choir gave beach concerts in churches and shopping centers.

March 28, 1971, was designated as Bill Andrews Day. As the church bulletin stated:

This is to be their day, ALL DAY. Bill is preaching for us at both services this morning. Bill and Connie and their children have endeared themselves to Providence. They have deepened our mission outlook and responsibility. They have brought new insights to us concerning our mission endeavor.....and will be leaving us on April 3 to return to Chile.

At 3:00 pm on Sunday, March 28, Martha Iley presented a voice recital in the new fellowship hall. For some time, she had been studying voice at Winthrop College under voice teacher Jerry Helton. At the 11:00 am worship service, Mr. Helton sang "'Twas Ever Loneliness So Great."

On April 4, 1971, the Sanctuary Choir presented "The Resurrection Then and Now" which included readers, handbell choirs and congregational singing. On April 8 at the Maundy Thursday Service, the Sanctuary Choir sang "The Seven Last Questions" featuring readers and congregational singing. The service closed with the observance of the Lord's Supper.

The annual revival was held May 2-5, 1971, and began with the Men and Boys Country Ham Breakfast at 7:30 am on Sunday morning. The revival theme was "Monday Morning Religion" with Dr. Luther Joe Thompson, Senior Minister of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia, as guest revivalist. The revival agenda included morning devotionals, ladies luncheons, youth services, choir specials and evening services.

In conference on Sunday night, April 25, the church approved two significant items: first, to retire the "Jolly Green Giant" and buy a bus for \$10,000 with the Youth Council leading a fund-raising campaign and, second, to co-sponsor the new Sharon Road Mission Church in partnership with the Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

The May 12, 1971, *Pastorgram* announced that Louise Fowler, Educational Secretary for four years, had resigned and that church member Arthur Smith had been on a WTVI-TV panel that discussed

Liquor by the Drink in Charlotte. It also stated that Dr. Leighton Ford, member of the Billy Graham Team, would preach on Sunday, May 16, while Pastor Crouch was conducting a revival in Reidsville.

Sunday, May 23, was the 17th Anniversary of Providence Baptist Church and provided former members and guests an opportunity to tour the new church facilities. The very special day culminated with dinner-on-the-grounds.

The May 26 **Pastorgram** announced that Elaine Kessler had joined the staff as Educational Secretary replacing Louise Fowler. Mrs. Kessler had a rich background in denominational work.

The June 2 **Pastorgram** headline read: *Meet Our New Daughter: The Sharon Road Baptist Mission.* The Mecklenburg Baptist Association purchased eight acres of land at Sharon Road and Whistlestop to build a new church and Providence, on April 25, 1971, agreed to sponsor the new church. A committee of nine served as an advisory group, with three from Providence: W. R. Littleton, Russ Tucker and Herman Kissiah. At the time, about 50 persons were attending the mission services. Providence members were encouraged to help meet the financial, physical and spiritual needs of the new mission. The July 12, 1971, **Pastorgram** stated that the Sharon Road Mission had called as pastor, Dr. C. C. Warren, Pastor Emeritus of the First Baptist Church in Charlotte.

The July 12 **Pastorgram** also carried the announcements that Lowell Dotson was starting his third year as Minister of Music, and Dean "Mr. K" Kaufman was starting his seventh year as Minister of Education and Youth. Both ministers played vital roles in the growing Providence ministry in the Charlotte area.

While Pastor Crouch was vacationing in late July and early August, two old Providence friends filled the pulpit. The first was Dr. Ben C. Fisher, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Southern Baptist Education Commission, who wrote in the July 26, 1971, **Pastorgram**: *I have always had a special fondness for the people of Providence, and view it as one of the real miracles in the Southern Baptist Convention and attribute it to what missionary-minded Baptists can do.* The second was Rev. Donald Myers, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Reidsville and brother of church member Charles T. Myers.

On Sunday, August 15, the Youth Mission Choir sang at both

morning services and gave their testimonies as active participants in the Mission Trip North. During the vesper hour, they showed slides and gave personal impressions concerning the trip and work. The 50-member Senior High Choir was selected to sing at the Festival in the Park on September 26, 1971, which presented a great opportunity for the young people to sing and witness.

During 1971 as part of his community involvement, Pastor Crouch served as chaplain of the Charlotte Police Department. His task was to minister to the police officers and families in crisis situations and to help in counseling them in personal problems. He later served as chaplain for the Charlotte Hornets NBA team.

The August 30 **Pastorgram** reported that church member Nancy Wilson, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Grady Wilson, and her husband, Gerald Gardner, had been appointed as missionaries by the Wycliffe Bible Translators and assigned to the Jungle Aviation and Radio Service Department.

October 8-10, 1971, was Family Life Emphasis with three-day workshop sessions for all members of the family as well as singles and divorced persons. The guest speakers were Dr. and Mrs. David Edens of Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri. Dr. Edens was a professor, marriage counselor, clinically trained psychotherapist and author of several outstanding books for adults and teenagers.

October 1971 began Pastor Crouch's fourth year at Providence. In the October 4 **Pastorgram** he stated:

The decision to accept your call was 'An Adventure in Faith' and your decision to issue that call was one too. The risk was high and we both had a lot at stake. Yet, the commitment was made with the definite feeling that God's will was being done.....and the Adventure began.

On October 11, Minister of Music Lowell Dotson announced that Mrs. Roye Lynn Kulick, church Organist, had been asked to be the official organist and accompanist at both the North Carolina Baptist Convention in Charlotte and the Southern Baptist Convention in Philadelphia. The church celebrated with Mrs. Kulick in being selected for these very important roles.

The October 18 **Pastorgram** reported that Providence's WMU had received an honor of "distinction" by the Southwide Office. Carol Hodges and her leadership team richly deserved the honor.

In the October 25 *Pastorgram*, the pastor stated that Providence, based upon the Mecklenburg Association Digest of Letters, was the third largest church in Charlotte with 1,608 members. First Baptist was the largest with 2,626, and Pritchard was second with 2,548 members. Providence was fourth in mission giving with \$44,110.

On Sunday, October 24, 1971, the Finance Committee presented the 1972 budget of \$300,000 for discussion. It was \$30,000 higher than the 1971 budget which was inadequate for church needs. The budget was approved on October 31 at both morning services.

November began with the Baptist Women's church-wide mission study with guest speaker Mrs. C. C. Warren, who taught the book *Drums Over Africa*. This was followed by the week-long Lay Evangelism School sponsored by the Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

Most of November 1971 was spent on stewardship for the 1972 budget, culminating with Pledge Day on Sunday, November 14. However, the \$300,000 budget was not pledged until November 28.

The Baptist State Convention began at Ovens Auditorium on November 22, 1971. On Sunday, November 21, Dr. Nathan Brooks, Director of the Division of Church Programs, spoke during the morning services. Dr. Corbin Cooper, Secretary of the Department of Interracial Cooperation, spoke during the vesper hour.

The November 28 vesper hour guest was Rev. Gerald Gardner, new missionary with JAARS, who was soon to be sent to the mission field in South America. His wife, Nancy, was the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Grady Wilson.

Sunday, November 28, began a month-long emphasis on missions which culminated in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. The Southern Baptist goal was \$16,750,000 to support the Baptist mission program around the world, and the Providence goal was \$4,000. The guest speaker on December 5 was Dr. Grady Wilson, a member of the Foreign Mission Board.

The Sharon Mission Adult Choir provided the music at the 8:45 am worship service on December 5, and Jim Moss, Director of Music at Sharon, led the worship music. At the Sunday, December 12, 8:45 am service, the 40-member Vesper Girls' Choir, directed by Martha Iley, provided the music.

December 1971 was filled with a variety of Christmas music. On December 12 the Sanctuary Choir presented a "Christmas Oratorio" by Saint-Saens, directed by Lowell Dotson. The soloists were: Norma Jean Burke, Patti Walker, Margie Crowder, Harriet Farmer, Ralph Squires, Bob Duncan and Bryan Coates. Mrs. Linda Booth of Charlotte was the guest harpist. The other programs were:

December 17: Junior High and Senior High Christmas program at the Charlottetown Mall

December 18: Ladies Handbell Choir at the SouthPark Mall

December 19: Annual Candlelight Service and Sanctuary Choir music program

December 22: Annual Children's Choir program

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1971, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile and Church Member
Dr. Nathan Brooks, Director, Division of Church Programs,
North Carolina Baptist Convention

Dr. Corbin Cooper, Secretary, Department of Interracial
Cooperation, North Carolina Baptist Convention

Dr. David Edens, Family Life Counselor, Stephens College,
Columbia, Missouri

Dr. Leighton Ford, Evangelist, Billy Graham Team Member

Rev. R. M. Greer, Professor of Old and New Testaments,
Wingate College

Dr. James Sullivan, Executive Secretary, Southern Baptist
Sunday School Board

Dr. L. J. Thompson, Pastor, First Baptist, Richmond, VA

At the beginning of 1972, Pastor Crouch announced that Two Large Emphases were ahead for the church. The first was the January 9-12 annual Bible Study Course on the book of Job with guest teacher Dr. J. J. Owens, Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at the Southern Baptist Seminary. The second emphasis was the Growth Fund Study Committee Report to introduce and propose a funding plan for the next church building program to take place between 1975-1977. The called church conference on January 16 approved the plan by a large majority.

Providence church membership on January 1, 1972, was 1,595,

with 68 Sharon Mission members, for a total membership of 1,663. Sunday School enrollment was 1,360, with an average attendance of 720. Training Union enrollment was 225, with an average attendance of 140.

The January 24, 1972, *Pastorgram* reported that the Providence Youth Mission Choir would make a second mission trip to Rome, New York, August 9-19, 1972, with 30 choir members eligible to participate. The Grace Church in Rome requested that Providence members collect savings stamps, preferably Green Stamps, that could be used to purchase a bus to bring young people to the church services. Providence members responded with enthusiasm.

The January 31 *Pastorgram* announced that Mrs. Judy Long had joined the staff as a part-time Financial Secretary. One of her main duties was to computerize the church bookkeeping system.

During February 1972, Pastor Crouch served as the moderator of the Charlotte Clergy's television program "Perspectives," a taped show shown on Sunday mornings at 11:00 am on WBTV. Also during February, Providence acquired a new Ford church bus painted red, white and blue to replace the Jolly Green Giant. The funding was provided through a youth campaign, with the air conditioning paid for by a church member. The bus was a shiny new tool for Providence ministries.

On February 27, the Music Ministry hosted the nationally known Furman Singers under the direction of Bingham Vick. Many Charlotte area Furman University friends were present for the vesper hour concert.

In the February 21, 1972 *Pastorgram*, Pastor Crouch announced two new mission projects: a monthly gift to the Charlotte Rehabilitation Center (formerly the Rescue Mission), and a commitment to the Wycliffe Bible Translators in support of the Gerald Gardners' mission work in South America.

March is Home Missions time in the Southern Baptist Convention. The 1972 theme was "Expect-Attempt." Thus, March 5-12, 1972, was observed as a Week of Prayer for Home Missions with a church goal of \$2,000. The guest speaker was Rev. Ken Lyle, Director of Home Missions in the New York City area. Another key part of the week was the church-wide mission study of the book, *Catalyst in Missions*, taught by Rev. Lawrence Childs,

Superintendent of Missions for the Mecklenburg Association.

Providence began an educational loan program in March 1972 to be administered on the basis of need, with church members having preference. Loans would not exceed \$250 per semester or \$500 per year, and repayment of loans would begin within 90 days of graduation. The loan program began with \$1,300 donated by a church friend. Future funds would come from donations and the annual church budget.

Pastor Crouch announced on March 6, 1972, that Marshall Thompson of the Ketchum Corporation had opened an office in the educational building. Mr. Thompson would be directing the \$500,000 Growth Fund to build the new sanctuary. The campaign would be conducted over a 12-week period, and all church members were encouraged to actively participate.

Several church members were given congratulations during March 1972. Mark Caddell was the proud recipient of a Morehead Scholarship to Chapel Hill. David Arant and Jane Shannon were selected Mr. Basketball and Miss Basketball at East Mecklenburg High School. Dr. Amos Bumgardner was honored for his 50 years as an orthodontist on March 18 in Atlanta.

The Easter music program, "The Seven Last Words of Christ" by Theodore Dubois, was conducted by Minister of Music Lowell Dotson. The Sanctuary Choir was accompanied by a string quartet, harp, oboe and piano from the Charlotte Symphony, and the soloists were choir members. Mrs. Roye Lynn Kulik was the pianist.

On March 18, 1972, Pastor Crouch announced that the slogan for Phase II of the building program was "Better To Serve Christ." The general chair of the Growth Fund-Phase II Campaign was George McLaney, Jr., and Pansy Brown was chairwoman of Coordination. To inspire church members to actively participate, Arthur Smith wrote a song entitled "*SHOWERS OF BLESSINGS*:"

*At Providence we have had showers,
Of blessings for nineteen years,
Now we should bloom as the flowers,
Let's forge ahead without fears.
Showers, Showers of Blessings,
Come and let us get things done,
We've got the families to do it,*

*Four hundred seventy-one.
 Showers of blessings will turn in
 To victory on May twenty-fourth.
 We will have pledged half a million,
 If we all do what we ought.
 Showers, Showers of Blessings,
 With joy we'll celebrate,
 We'll build a great place of worship,
 We will put wings to our faith.*

During the last of March and early April, Providence actively helped prepare for the April 5-9 Billy Graham Crusade at the Charlotte Coliseum. Church members served on committees for counseling and follow-up, delegations, finance, music, prayer hosts, ushers and youth-college. It was a great week for all church members who participated.

In a called conference on Sunday, April 2, 1972, the church approved a Mission Committee recommendation to pledge \$20,000 to the Sharon Mission Church to enable them to build their temporary auditorium. The \$20,000 would be paid from the church budget over a four-year period.

Most of April 1972 was devoted to organizing, studying, praying and soliciting pledges for the Phase II Growth Fund. By May 1, 25% of the goal of \$500,000 had been reached. Pastor Crouch stated that the campaign was not a success in the totals reached nor number participating until all church members had responded.

June 1972 began with the Baptist Women's Council General Meeting with Mrs. Gerald Gardner (formerly Nancy Wilson) as the guest speaker. She spoke about her training and future plans with JAARS as a missionary team with her husband in South America.

Sunday, May 21, 1972, brought a welcome pause in the Growth Fund Campaign in order to celebrate Providence's 19th Anniversary. As the church bulletin stated, *God has been good to us as a group. We have a great many blessings to be thankful for today. It was a great time for rejoicing and fellowship.* At the vesper hour, participants were treated to a cello and piano concert by Carol Alexander and Roye Lynn Kulik.

On June 12 George Eison, son of church member Bill Eison, began his tenure as a Summer Youth Worker helping in the church

expanded summer youth program. He was a product of the program, having served as senior high youth council president, and he would be a senior at Furman University in the fall.

During July 1972, Providence observed the anniversaries of two staff ministers. Lowell Dotson completed his third year as Minister of Music, and Dean Kaufman completed his seventh year as Minister of Education. As Pastor Crouch stated: *Both have proven themselves to be all but indispensable as they have shared talents and lives with us. So, gratefully, we acknowledge their leadership and praise the Lord that they serve on the team at Providence.*

Also during July 1972, Providence hosted two events for the Baptist-Metro Ministries which consisted of 13 Negro and white Baptist churches. The first event was a fellowship picnic, and the second event was Camp Amigo, a day camp that met at Providence. Members were encouraged to participate in both events.

The July 10 **Pastorgram** announced that the Sharon Mission Church had begun construction of a building costing \$30,000 with a Christmas completion date. The building would be used for worship and resemble our "Hut," later doubling for fellowship events. In addition, three "honorary" deacons from Sharon were selected to serve with Providence deacons: Lee Smoak, Ray Smith and Conrad Beam. During June 1972, Sharon attendance averaged 107 per week. Dr. C. C. Warren continued to serve as interim pastor.

The Providence Mission Singers left on July 20 to begin the annual Mission Trip North. That night they presented a concert at Lawndale Baptist Church in Greensboro and on July 21 were in Port Jervis, New York. While in New York, they participated in community Bible Schools, took a religious census and gave nightly concerts. Thirty-one persons participated in the mission trip which ended on July 29.

In called conference on Sunday, July 23, the church approved Pastor Crouch's request to take summer sabbaticals in 1973 and 1974 to be used for seminary study, meditation and personal refreshment. It would not result in the pastor being away from the church more than usual, just taking the time in a block. The request was approved and is still available for staff members today.

At a special called business meeting on July 30, 1972, the church heard and approved the following letter of resignation:

Dear Friends:

Seven years ago the Lord led me to look seriously at Providence Baptist Church in view of becoming your Minister of Education and Youth. I accepted the Lord's leadership and have endeavored to fulfill His will while in your midst.

Now, once again, it appears He is calling me to assume similar duties, although there will be a new title, with the Greenwich Baptist Church in Greenwich, Connecticut. We came because we felt it was the Lord's will and we leave under the same circumstances.

Therefore, I ask you to accept my resignation as Minister of Education and Youth effective August 31.

*Sincerely yours,
Dean Kaufman*

In the August 7, 1972 **Pastorgram**, Pastor Crouch responded as follows to Dean's resignation:

Dean is leaving, what will we do? Our response should not center around ourselves but should focus on Dean and Dorothy. They have felt the 'call' to a new field of service and with faith have responded to that challenge. Thus, we should be supportive and not make the change difficult.

Our best response is one of gratitude for the seven years of devoted service he has given to Providence. He served as a connecting link between the first two pastors of this church and has magnificently ministered. He arrived at a time he was desperately needed and gave to us a leadership that bridged a crisis in our life as a church. Faithfully and loyally he fulfilled the tasks assigned. There are many things we shall remember him for: the youth retreats, the strawberry pie, the Yankee tact, the colorful clothes and the ability to get things done quickly and with finesse. He has left his mark on us and we shall miss him!

The guest speaker on Sunday, August 6, was Rev. Bill Andrews. Bill and Connie, missionaries to Chile, had taken leave to return for son Bill's marriage to Cathy Kale on August 5 at Providence. The Andrews were special persons to Providence Baptists.

Several staff changes were announced on August 13, 1972. Mrs.

Geneal Heatherley resigned as the pastor's Secretary. Mrs. Becky Owen assumed that position, and Mrs. Judy Long replaced Becky as Financial Secretary and Secretary to the Minister of Education and Youth. Mrs. Long had been employed part-time for several months.

On August 18, 19 and 23, 1972, the youth choirs of Myers Park, St. John's and Providence presented "Lighthouse," a musical interpretation of the Beatitudes as found in Matthew 5:1-17. Audience responses indicated that they performed magnificently.

The week of August 20, 1972, was Association Mission Week. Providence was one of 69 Baptist churches that were members of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association serving nearly 35,000 Baptist people. The primary focus of the association was to engage in direct, cooperative mission activities which could not be accomplished by the member churches acting independently. For example, Providence Baptist is a direct result of Associational Missions, and Providence was helping Sharon Road Mission to become another Baptist church.

Saturday night, August 26, was D. K. Night, a night of fun, fellowship and farewell to Dean and Dorothy Kaufman for seven years of dedicated service. This was followed on August 27 by a vesper hour interracial service with Dr. Leon Riddick of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church as the guest speaker. He was an excellent speaker who played an important role in the life of Charlotte as a Black leader. Mt. Carmel was also a member of Baptist Metro-Ministries.

September 1972 saw the focus upon selecting new deacons, State Missions, the Better Homes Club and other church organizations. Rev. Bill Andrews had a birthday on September 8 shortly after returning to the Chile mission field. The Gerald Gardners were in language school in Costa Rica prior to assuming mission assignment with JAARS in South America.

The Baptist Women of Providence held their last meeting of the church year on September 11 with guest speaker Mrs. Judson Lennon, a missionary to Thailand. Following her presentation, Mrs. Lennon installed the new officers for 1972-1973.

Pastor Henry Crouch began his fifth year on October 1, 1972. A summary of his first four years is as follows:

1. A campus of 25 acres, new ball field and land development (picnic area pending)
2. Increase in staff with the addition of a full-time Minister of Music
3. Bond sale of \$800,000 providing financing for a new education and fellowship building, doubling plant size
4. Budget increase from \$160,000 to \$301,200
5. Membership increase from 1,068 to 1,685 in four years, total of 884 new members with 242 coming by baptism
6. Sponsorship of the Sharon Mission Church
7. Growth Fund-Phase II with \$400,000 pledged toward new worship center
8. Additional program features such as Scouts and Better Homes Club – Kindergarten coming in 1973
9. One of top 20 churches of North Carolina in mission response

Pastor Crouch announced on September 25, 1972, that "North Carolina for Christ: Together We Advance" would be the theme of the three-year emphasis (1973-1975) designed to undergird the spiritual enrichment of the local church and the total Baptist witness of our State Convention. This would close out the leadership of our Executive-Secretary, Dr. W. Perry Crouch, father of the pastor.

Pastor Crouch and several Providence members were key participants in a new organization called Mecklenburg Missions Partners in October 1972. The purpose of the new organization was to plan, raise funds and build 55 new Baptist churches in Mecklenburg County by 1990 to keep pace with the county's expected population growth.

One of the most effective facets of ministry at Providence by October 1972 was the Better Homes Club for young couples featuring dinner, fellowship and discussions on subjects vital to the building of Christian homes. The church benefited from the club in several ways: personal growth from individuals which deepened the maturity process, more open and frank communication within families, an improved attitude about others that are different, new friendships among young couples, a new sense of belonging and, above all, committed young people who were serious in their attempts to build Christian homes.

The annual revival was held November 3-5, 1972, conducted by the Billy Graham Crusade Associates, headed by Dr. Grady Wilson (Providence's favorite son) as guest evangelist. The revival organist was Ted Cornell. The music leader was Steve Musto, who worked hand-in-hand with Minister of Music Lowell Dotson and the church choirs to form a revival choir.

The big item of discussion during late October and early November 1972 was the 1973 church budget. The Finance Committee, chaired by Alex Holmes, developed the theme "Committed to Care" for the 1973 financial program. The budget was for \$327,945, an increase of \$26,745 over the 1972 budget. The week of November 8 was Commitment Week.

Several Providence members were in the news during October and November 1972. Chuck Edwards, licensed to preach in October, built a boat to provide a ministry on Lake Wylie. Arthur Smith was state-wide chair of the Christmas Seal Campaign. Dr. Grady Wilson preached the closing message to the North Carolina Baptist Convention. Eddie Payne, a senior at Wake Forest, was captain of the team. Bobby Jones, a junior at Chapel Hill, was acclaimed as a candidate for All-American and the Olympic Team scheduled to play in Germany during the summer of 1973.

The November 23 *Pastorgram* carried a proposed job description for a new Minister of Education and stated that Pastor Crouch had been named to the General Board of the Baptist State Convention that supervised, coordinated and planned the work of the State Convention. It also announced the death of Rev. Reece M. Hagler, retired Baptist pastor and Providence Pastoral Associate from May-September 1965.

At the November 26 business meeting, the congregation approved a recommendation to name the student loan fund the Dale Brown Memorial Student Loan Fund. The object of the recommendation was to give a personality to the fund and a fitting memorial to one of the church youth who so tragically lost his life.

The Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was December 4-8, 1972, with guest speaker Rev. Judson Lennon, missionary to Thailand. The 1972 Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$18,000,000 with Providence's goal being \$7,000. In addition, the December 3 morning worship speaker was Rev. Lawrence

Childs, the Mecklenburg Associational Missionary, who spoke on missions and the church's responsibility to them.

The 1972 church year concluded with a pageant of Christmas music. On December 10, the Sanctuary Choir presented Handel's "Messiah," concluding with the "Hallelujah Chorus." Soloists were: Ray McCormick (bass), Martha Sencer (alto), Martha Iley (soprano) and Norma Jean Burke (soprano). This was followed on December 17 by the annual Candlelight Vesper Service, with the Sanctuary Choir leading in a service of instrumental music along with popular Christmas carols. For many, this service was the highlight of church Christmas activities. On December 20, the Children's Choir presented a program of sacred and popular Christmas carols.

The final event of 1972 was the December 31 youth worship service, led by Youth Ministers Bill Crouch and Bill Fuller, which ended with the Watch Night Service in the sanctuary.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1972, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile

Rev. Lawrence Childs, Mecklenburg Baptist Associational Missionary

Rev. Lloyd Hales, Director, Church Social Ministries, Mecklenburg Baptist Association

Dr. W. H. Williams, Pastor Emeritus, Pritchard Memorial

Rev. Ken Lyle, SBC Superintendent of Missions for Metro New York Baptist Association

Rev. Robert Mullinax, Executive Secretary, Council on Christian Higher Education, NC Baptist Convention

Dr. Grady Wilson, Billy Graham Team Member

At Providence, 1973 began with the annual church-wide Bible Study from January 14-17. The guest teacher was Dr. Henry Turlington, Senior Minister of University Baptist Church of Chapel Hill, who taught "The Letters of Paul to the Galatians."

The January 11, 1973, *Pastorgram* announced the beginning of two new memorial funds. The first was the Mildred Massey gift of \$500 which could be used for charity at the discretion of the church ministers. The fund typified the nature of Mildred Massey who in life constantly did for others without ceremony or fanfare. The second was the George O'Hara gift of \$1,000 to begin a new sports arena or

gym for the church recreational program. This gift showed George O'Hara's keen interest in sports and youth. Such gifts were added to those given as memorials to the Organ Fund (\$2,602 at the end of 1972) and the Dale Brown Memorial Student Loan Fund (\$3,200 at the end of 1972).

Two other significant announcements were made on January 11. All church records had been converted over to the computer, and the Providence offering to Foreign Missions was nearly \$10,000 rather than the \$7,000 goal — a giving record for Providence at Christmas.

Providence church membership on January 1, 1973, was 1,708. Sunday School enrollment was 1,399, with an average attendance of 697. Training Union enrollment was 226, with an average attendance of 143.

Three events highlighted the close of January 1973: the search for a new Minister of Education, the Better Homes Club meeting featuring Dr. Swan Haworth, a noted author, counselor and teacher who spoke on "Adjustments in Marriage," and the Metro Fellowship Supper at Park Road Baptist Church featuring Dr. W. R. Grigg of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Sunday, January 25, was a busy day at Providence. It began with the Baptist Men's Day breakfast, followed by the regular morning services, the 3:00 pm. dedication and grand opening of the new temporary worship building at the Sharon Mission Church and concluded with the vesper service and business meeting, which approved a call to Rev. Ron Bayless as new Minister of Education.

Rev. Bayless was serving as Minister of Education at the First Baptist Church of St. Charles, Missouri. He was 36 years of age, held Master of Divinity and Master of Religious Education Degrees from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and had nine years experience in the field of education. He and his wife, Celia, had two daughters: Celeste, age 5, and Shawna, age 4. Mrs. Bayless was an approved state worker for Sunday School in the preschool area, wrote for WMU literature, and had led conferences at Ridgecrest and Glorietta. The Bayless family came highly recommended through Baptist channels.

The February 1 *Pastorgram* announced that Rev. Ron Bayless had accepted the church's call as Minister of Education. His beginning date was uncertain, but as Pastor Crouch stated,

Happiness is having a new minister on staff to help us grow as Christians in our own maturity as well as reach out in ministry.

February 1973 was Home for the Aging Month for North Carolina Baptists. The guest speaker was Dr. E. Warren Rust who was in Charlotte conducting a Metropolitan Conference for local ministers. In conjunction with this focus, the Providence WMU Mission Study Course was "No Man Goes Alone," led by Mamie Snider, the WMU President.

Four notable names were added to the church membership rolls in February 1973: Music Entertainer George Hamilton, IV, his wife, and their two children, Peyton and Chip.

March 4-11, 1973, was a Week of Prayer for Home Missions which culminated with the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The Southern Baptist Convention goal for 1973 was \$6.6 million; the North Carolina Baptist goal was \$650,000, and the Providence goal was \$2,000. A key part of the Home Mission Board theme of "Crossing Barriers" was to encourage Baptists to be conscious of other people who were different yet who have a deep commitment to God. Thus, Pastor Crouch invited Rabbi Mel Silverman to lead the March 4 vesper service and engage Providence members in a dialogue concerning the faith of Israel. He also discussed the different denominations within Judaism. It was a meaningful and productive service.

On March 8, 1973, the church called Harvey Myers, a student at Southeastern Baptist Seminary, as summer Minister of Youth. During the summer of 1972, he served on a youth evangelism team that participated in youth revivals at churches in Maryland. His job at Providence was to plan and supervise all types of recreation and fellowship events for church youth, as well as be available for counseling. He lived and had his office in the youth building.

Ron Bayless began his tenure at Providence on March 14, 1973. The Bayless family participated in services on Sunday, March 18.

Providence was treated to a music special on Saturday, March 17, by the internationally acclaimed Wheaton College Men's Glee Club. A good time was had by all who attended the concert.

Sunday, April 1, 1973, was an historic day for Providence and its mission work. At 3:00 pm the Sharon Mission Church was organized into an autonomous Baptist church. The dedication speaker was Dr.

W. Perry Crouch, Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention and father of Henry Crouch. Sponsored jointly by the Mecklenburg Baptist Association and Providence, it started as a mission on April 16, 1971, with 11 persons. Today it has over 150 members with a temporary sanctuary built by the members with financial support from Providence. The chapel was named Warren Chapel in honor of Dr. C. C. Warren, the mission's pastor.

On Sunday, April 1, Providence expanded its community outreach by starting a bus ministry which had a very positive beginning. As the April 5 *Pastorgram* announced, *Our hearts were thrilled last Sunday morning at the wonderful response by the people to our bus ministry.* Dr. Charles V. Petty, Executive Secretary of Christian Life and Public Affairs of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, was guest speaker for all services.

The spring revival was held April 29-May 2, 1973, with guest evangelist Dr. W. Harold Killian, Senior Pastor of the Earle Street Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina. Each day of the revival focused upon a different aspect of the Providence family: Better Your Best Sunday, Youth Celebration, Deacons, Brotherhood and WMU, and Family Night. It was a stirring revival for all.

The "renewal" theme begun by Rev. Killian during the revival was continued on Sunday, May 6, by Rev. William H. Boatwright, Director of Public Relations for the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, who focused upon "People Caring for People."

The resignation of Judy Long was announced on May 10. She had served as Financial Secretary since January 1972. On May 30, Bobbye Webster began duties as Educational Secretary, responsible for the *Pastorgram*, bulletin, records, visitation file, etc. During the week of June 7, 1973, Maxine Dunn became Financial Secretary.

On May 27, 1973, Providence celebrated its 19th Anniversary with dinner-on-the-grounds. That evening a special memorial service honored deceased members. The service concluded with a concert by the Sanctuary Choir presenting the "Faure Requiem," directed by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by Roye Lynn Kulik on the organ. It was a lovely concert with strings, harp and organ. The soloists were Ann Squires, soprano, and Bob Duncan, baritone.

On June 28, 1973, it was reported that the Brotherhood had established a blood account with the American Red Cross. At the June 26 business meeting, the congregation approved calling it the "Billy Craig Memorial Blood Account of Providence Baptist Church." Billy, a church member, died from leukemia at the age of nine. Members were encouraged to give to the account regularly.

Rev. Dean Kaufman returned on August 5, 1973, preached at the 11:00 am service and received a standing ovation. He stayed for the evening ice cream social for which Providence had become famous.

The August 9, 1973, *Pastorgram* announced that Jeannie Fulford had accepted the position of Director of Playschool and Kindergarten. She had 10 years teaching experience in kindergarten programs across North Carolina. The program would start with three, four and five-year-olds, and church members would receive discounts. The kindergarten program had been dormant since August 1961 due to lack of enrollment.

On August 12, 1973, the new Sharon Baptist Church called its first pastor, Rev. Daniel Deaton, from the First Baptist Church of Beaufort, North Carolina. Providence had been asked to provide \$2,000 toward the purchase of a home for Rev. Deaton, which had been provided in the 1972 church budget.

The week of August 19-24, 1973, was Associational Missions Week with the theme, "Together We Advance."

September 1973 brought another "first" for Providence when the church engaged Delmar of Charlotte to produce a Pictorial Church Directory. Delmar would provide each family photographed with a free directory, and families had the option of purchasing photos.

The children of former Providence staff members were in the news during the summer of 1973. Dale and Melissa Kaufman graduated from Appalachian State University. Gary Kaufman graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Gordon Weekley's son, Steve, was married on September 1 to Laura Glasgow and would be living in Newark, New Jersey.

The week of September 16, 1973, was State Missions Week. The goal for North Carolina was \$500,000, and Providence's goal was \$500.

Following the vesper service on September 9, a reception honored Harvey Myers, Summer Youth Minister, who had completed his

duties and was returning to the seminary. Rev. Ron Bayless, Minister of Education, expressed his appreciation for Harvey's help and leadership.

The Brotherhood held a breakfast meeting at the Homestead Restaurant on September 17. Rev. Lloyd Hales, Director of Christian Social Ministries of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association, was the speaker with the theme, "Opportunities To Fulfill Our Missions."

The September 13 *Pastorgram* carried exciting news about the new Playschool Program. Director Jeannie Fulford announced that during the first week, 21 three-year-olds and 19 four-year-olds had been enrolled, and there was a waiting list. She also announced that Karen Apple had joined the teaching staff.

Minister of Education Ron Bayless stated that Providence would hold its "first" annual Leadership Banquet on September 24, which was a prelude to a Leadership Training Seminar for all church leaders. The guest speaker was the Honorable Brooks Hays, past President of the Southern Baptist Convention and Congressman under two presidents. On the same program were Patsy Monhollon, featured in pantomime, and Jerry Helton, soloist. The church leadership corps and those who had served would also be recognized. It was a grand evening.

September 1973 closed with the Better Homes Club meeting with guest speaker Dr. Andrew D. Lester, Director of the Department of Pastoral Care and the School of Pastoral Care at North Carolina Baptist Hospital. Dr. Lester had earned a reputation as one of the most dynamic men in the area of Christian-related psychology. His topic was "Adam's Rib or Women's Lib."

October began with an adult training program. The seminars were: *True Church Fellowship* (Barbara Williams), *Bird's Eye View of the Old Testament* (Patsy Monhollon), *History of the Bible Lands* (Selby Daniels), *The Person of the Holy Spirit* (Margaret Hilton), and *Bus Outreach Ministry* (Ron Bayless).

The guest speaker at the October 14, 1973, vesper hour was Rev. Dan Deaton, Pastor of the new Sharon Baptist Church. Providence was the co-sponsor of the Sharon Church, and this was Rev. Deaton's first visit to Providence.

On October 15, the newly formed Queen City Music Club met at Providence. The club concert was led by Alice and Richard Ungerbuehler, former Ministers of Music at Providence.

The Better Homes Club met on October 26 with guest speaker Rev. R. F. Smith, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Hickory. His topic was "Communications – OK and Not OK."

The youth choirs presented a concert entitled "Celebrate Life" at the vesper hour on October 28. The soloists were: Elaine Coates, Kathy Bishop and Bobby Lockee. The youth performed magnificently.

Providence launched its annual Stewardship Emphasis Program on Sunday, November 4, 1973, for the largest proposed budget in the church's history — \$382,130. As Pastor Crouch stated in the November 1 **Pastorgram**: *Before a Christian can grow as a steward, he must acknowledge that God is owner and ruler of all he owns.....* Commitment Day for the 1974 budget was November 11, and Victory Sunday was set for November 18.

Two new outreach groups were organized at Providence in November 1973. The first was a Senior Citizens Club for all church members 60 years of age or retired. The name they selected was "Triple L Club" or "Live Long and Like It." Marie Gutherie was elected president and Curtis Kizziah was chosen as secretary-treasurer. Everyone in the church community was eligible for membership in the Triple L Club. The second group was a "Singles Ministry" for the increasing number of single and divorced persons joining Providence.

December 1973 began with the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions with the theme, "God's Gift—Unspeakable." The Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$20,000,000. The Providence Lottie Moon Christmas offering goal was \$12,000.

Church Organist Roye Lynn Kulik was honored at a reception following the vesper service on November 18. Church members wished her much success in her responsibilities at First Methodist Church. Dennis Stabler was welcomed as the new Organist on Sunday, November 25. He was new to Charlotte and to Providence.

Christmas and music programs highlighted the month of December. On December 16, the Sanctuary Choir presented Phillip Landgrave's "When Jesus Comes," a new and beautiful work taking

a different approach to the traditional Christmas narrative. It presented Luke 2:8-20 as a picture of the sequence of events involved in the conversion experience – that what happened to the shepherds happens again to the one who responds in faith to the incarnate Word.

On December 19, a church-wide carol sing of both secular and sacred hymns was highlighted by the choir presentation of “AM AHL and the Night Visitors.” This was followed on December 23 by the annual Candlelight Service.

During Pastor Crouch’s absence in 1973, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

- Rev. Richard Allen, Pastor, St. Patrick’s Catholic Church
- Rev. William H. Boatwright, Director of Public Relations, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina
- Dr. John I. Durham, Professor of Old Testament, Southeastern Baptist Seminary
- Rev. Ray Fowler, Missionary to Brazil
- Rev. Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education, Greenwich Baptist Church, Connecticut
- Rev. Harold Killian, Senior Pastor, Earle Street Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina
- Dr. W. Otis McClung, Pastor, Randolph Memorial Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia
- Dr. E. Warren Rust, Assistant Director, Division of Associational Services, SBC Home Mission Board
- Dr. Henry E. Turlington, Senior Pastor, University Baptist Church, Chapel Hill

January 1974 began with the annual Bible Study Course on the book of Colossians taught by Dr. Raymond Brown, Dean at Southeastern Baptist Seminary. The object of the study was to lead Christians to a realization of God’s plan for Christ to have ultimate and total reign in their lives.

The other two big January 1974 events were the Baptist Metro Fellowship Dinner on January 22 and the Better Homes Club meeting on January 25. The Baptist Metro Dinner was held at Providence with the church furnishing the meal, decorations and entertainment. The guest speaker was Rev. Wesley Wiley, a Black pastor from Washington, DC. The Better Homes meeting was open

to all church couples and featured Dr. Robert Cooper, Professor of Hematology at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine. His topic was "Can Cancer Be Cured?"

The first major February 1974 event was the annual Sweetheart Banquet with guest speaker Doug Mayes, who joined WBTV-WBT Radio in 1952. At the time, he was the anchorman for WBTV's *Scene Tonight* and an active layman in his church. The Lay Evangelism School was held February 17-20 with evangelist Leonard O. Hinton, Jr., a Research Consultant with the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board. Rev. Hinton held a wide variety of experience in Witnessing Clinics, Lay Evangelism Schools and Seminars on the Spirit-Filled Life.

On February 24, 1974, Dr. Ralph Scales, President of Wake Forest University, spoke at the morning worship service and was hosted to lunch at the Carmel Country Club. At the vesper hour, the speaker was Rev. Robin Freeman, a Presbyterian minister who was the new Coordinator of the Charlotte Area Clergy Association.

February 1974 closed with a sacred music concert by the Furman University Concert Choir directed by Dr. Milburn Price. The 40-voice choir had won wide acclaim for excellence in choral music.

During the March 3 vesper hour, the guest speaker was Rev. Bill Andrews on leave from the Chile mission field. Chile had just gone through a military revolution, and there was much concern about the future of Baptist witness in the country. Bill and Connie gave a very stirring presentation regarding their mission work. The Andrews were on a mini-furlough to celebrate the marriage of their daughter, Martha, on March 13 at Providence.

From its inception, Providence actively reached out to the community. As a part of this community ministry, a church-wide Outreach Day was held on March 21, 1974, in preparation for the spring revival March 24-27. All church members were encouraged to pray, witness and attend the daily services. The guest revivalist was Dr. H. Franklin Paschall, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee. He was a past president of the Southern Baptist Convention, a well-known Bible scholar and had added 6,000 members to his church during 18 years as pastor. It was one of the best revivals ever held at Providence.

The revival was followed by the Week of Prayer for Home Missions with the theme, "In Him Is Life." A key part of the week was the Home Mission Study entitled "The Cutting Edge" taught by Pastor Crouch.

In business session on March 31, the church voted to call Rev. Randy Robinson, a senior at Southeastern Baptist Seminary, as Associate Pastor. As Pastor Crouch stated in the March 28 **Pastorgram**: *His title will be Associate Minister but his major responsibility will be the ministry to youth. He is 25 years of age, talented, intelligent, handsome and committed. He and wife Linda can be on the field by April 15.* Two other staff members were added in March 1974: Barbara Sorenson as Receptionist and Betty Slade to the playschool staff.

The church received the following response from Rev. Randy Robinson: *It is with great joy that I accept your call as Associate Pastor and Minister to Youth.....We anticipate great things with Providence and we appreciate this opportunity to share in your work.* Their first Sunday at Providence was April 21, 1974.

For the April 11 Maundy Thursday Service, the Sanctuary Choir presented "On the Passion of Christ" by David H. Williams. Following the choir's concert, Pastor Crouch led in the observance of the Lord's Supper.

April 14-19, 1974, was Youth Week. Highlights of the week were: Youth Sunrise Service, Youth Banquet, Youth Convention in Winston-Salem and Senior High Beach Retreat. They were also in charge of the Sunday School and worship services.

Rev. Ron Bayless celebrated his first anniversary as Minister of Education in March 1974. Sharon Baptist Church celebrated its first anniversary as a church, rather than a mission church, in April 1974. Sharon had 217 members, with an average attendance of 137. The 1974 budget was \$65,000, and the church was being led effectively by Rev. Dan Deaton.

Providence welcomed Dr. John E. Weems, the new President of Meredith College, as guest speaker on April 21. Several Providence girls were enrolled at Meredith and many others planned to attend.

The Baptist Metro Dinner was held at Myers Park Baptist Church on April 30, and 30 of the 250 participants were from Providence. The two guest speakers were: Dr. E. B. Hicks, Executive Secretary

for American Baptist Churches of the South, and Dr. Corbin Cooper, Secretary of the Department of Cooperative Ministries of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Sunday, May 5, 1974, began with the Father-Son Breakfast. The guest speaker was former RA basketball player and church member Bobby Jones, who had been selected as an All-American basketball player and Most Valuable Player at Chapel Hill. The day ended with George Hamilton, IV Night. George, a church member, served as Providence's International Ambassador of Jesus Christ while performing around the world. He had just returned from a concert tour behind the Iron Curtain countries. That evening he sang and shared his trip experiences with the congregation.

On May 21, 1974, the Baptist Metro Ministries sponsored a Home Fellowship Night in which black and white couples opened their homes to each other. Providence provided about 20 homes for the social. On May 26 Providence celebrated its 20th Anniversary Homecoming with a special program honoring former members and guests, followed by a bountiful picnic for all.

Providence hosted the Mecklenburg Associational Banquet on May 27 with the theme, "The World On Our Doorstep." The guest speaker was Dr. Owen Cooper, President of the Southern Baptist Convention.

At its May meeting, the Charlotte Area Clergy Association chose Henry Crouch as its new president. The Clergy Association represented over 400 clergy of all religious persuasions. Pastor Crouch was a strong supporter of brotherhood and fellowship with his peers.

During May, the Music Ministry presented two concerts. The first concert by the combined junior choirs, directed by Martha Iley, was "Cool in the Furnace," a musical story about Daniel and his friends Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego. After the presentation, Lowell Dotson said, '*Cool in the Furnace*' was 'real cool.' The second was a "Pops Concert" by the Sanctuary Choir, featuring solos, spirituals and show tunes, especially from *The King and I*. It was a stirring, fun performance.

In business session on May 26, the church voted to spend \$60,000 to proceed with the new parking area, which would double the church's off-street parking and be a part of the Growth Program.

Rev. Randy Robinson preached his first sermon on June 16, 1974, and the title was "Youth and the Church." On June 23, he was ordained to the ministry during the vesper hour. The guest speaker for the Ordination was Dr. John Carlton, one of Randy's professors at Southeastern Baptist Seminary.

From its inception, Providence has had a very mobile membership. During the summer of 1974, the following valuable families moved to other cities: Alex Holmes, Alman Reams, B. B. Pearce, Bryan Coates, George McLaney, Max Harris, David Crowder, Jim Monhollon and Ed Arnold. Fortunately, future key leaders were moving in to replace them.

During the week of June 20, 1974, it was announced that church Organist Dennis Stabler had accepted an appointment as Music Instructor at Sacred Heart College in Belmont. However, he would remain as church Organist.

The June 27, 1974, *Pastorgram* reported that Cheryl Iley had left on June 22 for a three-week concert tour of Romania with the Rotary Youth Choir. In preparation, she spent a week at Wildacres Music Camp and a week at Westminster Choir College. The same announcement reported that Gary and Beverly Kaufman had moved back to Charlotte and were rejoining Providence.

On July 2, 1974, Minister of Music Lowell Dotson announced that the Organ Drive Fund of \$10,000 had been reached and would be used to purchase a new Allen Organ for the sanctuary. A special thanks was given to Leroy Hendricks and his committee for a job well-done.

On July 14, the combined youth choirs presented the musical "Jubilation-Celebration," a work about the resurrection of Christ in a contemporary setting, using new language. Soloists were: Randy Moore, Renee Littleton, Jack Upton, Joe Whiteside, Skipper Haire and Mike McKee.

On July 18, 35 adults and youth departed for Portland, Oregon, and the Baptist World Youth Conference. They were gone for 28 days, sharing in song and fellowship led by Minister of Music Lowell Dotson.

During August 1974, two Providence members were in the news. Janice Uttley was appointed chairman of Volunteers for the Greater Carolinas Chapter of the American Red Cross, and Ken Johnson and

his 13-15 year-old baseball team won the John Fletcher League Championship and received the Sportsman Trophy.

While Pastor Crouch was vacationing in August, two special guest speakers filled the Providence pulpit. The first speaker was Dr. Harold Bennett, Executive Secretary of the Florida Baptist Convention and a native of Asheville. The second speaker was Rev. Gordon Weekley, Providence's first pastor. At the time, he was a member of the Midwood Baptist Church and on the staff of the Christian Rehabilitation Center in Charlotte. As Pastor Crouch stated in the August 15 *Pastorgram*: *Now is the time for him to return to us and reestablish a bond that was interrupted.....* The church was full that Sunday evening, and the congregation gave Gordon Weekley a very warm welcome.

Sunday, September 1, 1974, was a special day at Providence. Both morning services were preached by Rev. William H. Crouch, Jr., a student at Southeastern Baptist Seminary and the oldest son of Pastor and Mrs. Crouch. During the vesper hour, Charles "Chuck" Edwards was ordained. At the time, Chuck was a student at Fruitland Bible Institute and planned to go into evangelism.

September 18-22, 1974, was youth revival time. The guest evangelist was Wayne Butcher, a former district president of the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang, who was converted and became a Christian Youth Evangelist. He held the Providence youth and adults spellbound as he related first-hand experiences of life with the Hell's Angels.

The Providence Baptist Women held a mission focus program on October 1, 1974. The guest speaker was Mrs. Sara Lou Patterson, a retired Baptist missionary, who served in Nigeria with her husband for 40 years. Special music was provided by Mrs. Norma Jean Burke.

The highlight for October was the Marriage Enrichment Retreat held at Ridgecrest with Dr. Charles Petty as the program coordinator.

On October 13, 1974, the Music Ministry presented "I Wonder" by the youth choirs of the First Baptist Church of Spartanburg. Lowell Dotson heard this group at the Portland Youth Council and invited them to Providence.

A serious concern during September and October 1974 was the growing budget deficit of nearly \$40,000. Catching up on the budget was crucial for the Growth Fund Campaign and the search for long-term financing for the new sanctuary project.

Lowell Dotson announced on October 27, 1974, that the church had two new Sunday evening musicians. Miss Elizabeth Vincent, the new organist, earned a degree in music from Queens College. The new evening pianist was Carolyn Motsinger. Both were members of the Sanctuary Choir and active with the youth choirs.

November 1974 began with the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer on November 4 at the First Baptist Church with guest speakers Mrs. Carl Bates and Miss Linda Warren. This was followed by the November 17-20 World Mission Conference held at Pritchard Memorial with guest speakers: Ralph Yoars, Howard Ford, Kenneth Neibel, Gene Phillips and Roger Williams.

Sunday night, November 24, was Gardner-Webb Night. The highlight of the evening was a concert by the Gardner-Webb choir and band. Several group members were from the Charlotte area.

On December 1, 1974, Providence started a Special Education Class for the mentally retarded for ages 6-9, 10-13 and 14-17. The director was Linda Robinson, and the teachers were Jean Littleton and Larry and Jean Rutledge.

December 1-8, 1974, was the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions with the theme, "Grace So Amazing, Love so Divine." The Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$5,000,000 and the Providence goal \$12,500. The highlight of the week was the presentation of the play "It Cannot End at Kobe" and the Christmas music played by the Handbell Choir.

On December 15, the Sanctuary Choir presented "O Come Let Us Adore Him – The Music of Christmas," directed by Lowell Dotson. In addition, the Handbell Choir played the offertory, and violinists Leroy Hendricks and Ginger Player played the prelude music. At the vesper hour, the Youth Choirs presented their musical programs entitled "The Story of Christmas In Song."

The annual Candlelight Service was Sunday evening, December 22. The theme was "Meditations on the Nativity" by Milburn Price and L. D. Johnson and adapted musically by Lowell

Dotson. This was a commitment service to encourage participants to respond personally to the Christmas story.

December 29 was Student Appreciation Day, and all the church services were led by the college students. The sermons were delivered by Kirk Grosch, Beth Burnette and Sam Rutland, Jr. The music solos were by Melanie Myers and Elaine Coates.

In December 1974, the church approved a 1975 budget of \$389,300 compared to the 1974 budget of \$382,130. By the end of December, pledges had reached \$366,311. As of December 29, the 1974 deficit was nearly \$34,000.

The 1974 year was very good for Providence. Membership was 1,872, third in Mecklenburg County to First Baptist and Pritchard Memorial. Total receipts for 1973-74 were \$484,396, second to First Baptist. Of this amount Providence gave \$74,255 to mission causes, which was second to First Baptist. In Sunday School enrollment, Providence fell to fourth with 1,318.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1974, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile

Dr. Raymond Brown, Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Southeastern Baptist Seminary

Rev. Curtis A. Burge, Pastor, Sherwood Baptist, Albany, GA

Rev. William H. Crouch, Jr., Student at Southeastern Baptist Seminary and son of the Pastor

Dr. H. Franklin Paschall, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee

Rev. Robin Freeman, Coordinator, Charlotte Clergy Assn.

Rev. Randy Robinson, Associate Pastor

Dr. Ralph Scales, President, Wake Forest University

Rev. Ralph Yoars, Missionary to Hong Kong

January 1975 began slowly with the primary focus on finances, the building program, and commitment to church programs. The first major announcement was that Dr. W. Perry Crouch, the pastor's father, would be the guest speaker for the Baptist Metro Ministries Fellowship Dinner on January 14 at Park Road Baptist Church.

The annual January Bible Study Course guest teacher was Dr. Vance Havner. As Pastor Crouch stated in the January 16 *Pastorgram*: *Dr. Havner.....is a devotional man of keen insight who*

has the incisive homespun language to put the truth in an unforgettable way. He is known as a teacher, lecturer, preacher and author.

At the vesper hour on January 26, 1975, the church honored Aaron Wright who had served 20 years as church Custodian. Aaron was a deacon and trustee at the Mt. Moriah Baptist Church in Matthews, and members of Mt. Moriah participated in the service. Church members gave a love offering for Aaron and his family.

The week of February 16, 1975, was WMU Focus Week with a display of their mission activities in the church rotunda. The guest speaker was Rev. Albert Ambrose, an Associate in the Department of Renewal Evangelism of the Home Mission Board and a close friend of the Crouches.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was held March 2-9, 1975, and the Annie Armstrong Offering goal was \$1,500. The guest speaker was Nancy Kistler, a Charlotte native and graduate of Meredith College, who had worked with the North Carolina State Missions Board and had been very active in all phases of WMU work. She showed slides on the ministry of Southern Baptist home missionaries to the five major ethnic groups of the United States: Indian, Black, Spanish, European and Oriental.

The spring revival was March 16-19 with the theme, "Revival and Renewal." Guest evangelist Dr. Edwin Young, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Columbia, South Carolina, had served as Associate Pastor with Henry Crouch at Ardmore Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. Lowell Dotson led the music for the revival.

The Sanctuary Choir presented "Seven Last Words of Christ" by Dubois on March 23, 1975. The soloists were: Norma Jean Burke (soprano), Bryan Coates (tenor) and Bob Duncan (baritone). The concert also included strings, harp, oboe, French horn and Dennis Stabler as organist. It was a beautiful, inspiring performance.

Providence observed its annual Maundy Thursday Service which included the Lord's Supper and a Sanctuary Choir special entitled "On the Passion of Christ" by David H. Williams. The soloists were Sylvia Lemelin, Jeff Walker and Bob Duncan.

April 1975 was Youth Month with the theme, "The Church – Arena of Fulfillment." The highlight of the April 6 morning service was Pastor Crouch's presentation of the church keys to the youth

representatives in recognition of their leadership in all the church ministries during the month.

In 1975, Providence added a new medium to its community outreach. The 30-minute program entitled *The Voice of Providence*, a taped version of the prior Sunday's service, was aired over WBT Radio every Sunday morning at 7:00 am.

George Hamilton, IV, Providence's Country Music Evangelist, won two awards at the International Festival of Country Music in London — as the top United States male artist and as the past year's outstanding contributor to country music.

Joseph M. Haynes, Adult Consultant with the Sunday School Board, led a conference on April 20 for adult Sunday School teachers and directors to prepare them for the new church year.

On Sunday night, April 20, Providence member and country music star Arthur Smith gave a concert entitled "The Music and Witness of Arthur Smith." At the time Arthur had composed over 100 hymns and gospel songs and was a recording and television star known around the world.

In May, Providence participated in the Baptist Metro Fellowship Dinner at Friendship Baptist Church. The guest speaker was Rev. Joy Johnson of the First Baptist Church of Fairmont, North Carolina. Rev. Johnson was President of the General Baptist Convention of North Carolina and a member of the North Carolina General Assembly.

May 21, 1975, was the 21st Anniversary Celebration of Providence. Dr. Perry Crouch, father of Henry Crouch, delivered the anniversary sermon, followed by a church-wide picnic. A good time was had by everyone who attended.

At the vesper hour on June 1, the Junior Boys' Choir presented a musical concert entitled "Hey God, Listen, A Children Talk To God" by Roxie Gibson. The choir was directed by Lowell Dotson.

The guest speaker at both morning services on June 8, 1975, was Dr. Claude U. Broach, a well-known author and lecturer. He was Senior Minister at St. John's Baptist Church for 30 years prior to assuming the Directorship of the Ecumenical Institute, a project in human understanding that was jointly sponsored by Belmont Abbey College and Wake Forest University.

The June 19 **Pastorgram** announced that Miss Sally Young had been employed as a Summer Youth Worker to assist Rev. Randy Robinson with the extended summer youth program. Miss Young was a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and a member of St. John's Baptist Church where she had served for two years on the college council.

The June 26 **Pastorgram** reported that Becky Owen had resigned as the pastor's Secretary after serving Providence effectively for three and one-half years. In addition, Bobbye Webster, Education Secretary, was marrying Ray Wilson on June 28 with Rev. Ron Bayless performing the ceremony.

July 1, 1975, marked Lowell Dotson's sixth anniversary as Minister of Music. As the July 10 **Pastorgram** stated: *Without a doubt the Music Ministry of Providence is one of the best in North Carolina, and we are fortunate to have the Dotsons in our midst.*

An open church business meeting was held on Sunday, July 27, with guest Jack Bagwell of the Church Architecture Department in Nashville. Mr. Bagwell was engaged by Providence to look over the facilities and campus and study church plans for the future. Following his evaluation, he would make recommendations for Providence's future building plans.

The July 24 **Pastorgram** announced that Mrs. Bonnie Adams would be the pastor's new Secretary effective August 2. Bonnie, a graduate of Mars Hill College in Secretarial Science, brought a variety of experiences that would help in the pastor's office.

During the August 10 vesper hour, the youth singers and the youth choir from the First Baptist Church of Belmont presented selections from "Life," "Celebrate Life," "Light-Shine" and other works written by Alex Hagenbart, Minister of Music at First Baptist of Belmont. It was a special evening for all who attended.

On Sunday, September 7, the church was called into special session to discuss the future of Providence. Ben Knott, chair of the Finance Committee, gave a report concerning debt, present position, predictions as to capacity for future debt and indicated that the financial picture to borrow funds was excellent. Knott felt that Providence had the capacity to repay a \$1,500,000 loan over a 25-year period and suggested that the church seek permanent financing immediately.

Tom Pfaff, chair of the Building Committee, reported that such a budget would limit Providence to a basic sanctuary without a basement, but the Music Department would be included. The remodeling and additional adult space would have to come in another step at a later time. A scale model was then presented by the architect to be displayed in the rotunda of the church.

Sam Rutland, deacon chair, made the following recommendations to the church: (1) That Providence go ahead with the money search with a 10% ceiling on interest for the loan; (2) That Providence proceed with drawing plans and, when finished, receive bids from contractors as to cost; and (3) That a special Growth Fund Committee be appointed to secure additional pledges to assure a sound financial picture.

Church moderator Ed Haire opened the floor for questions and responses and at one point the congregation applauded the optimism of senior deacon Dr. Amos Bumgardner. The vote was called for and the response was unanimous and affirmative. As Pastor Crouch stated in the September 11 *Pastorgram*:

A spirit of warmth, optimism and unity was felt all day Sunday. Gratitude for sound business procedures, for excellent lay leadership, and for good stewardship on the part of our people gives us a basis for thanksgiving. God has given us a great opportunity for ministry!

Church Training Director Mary Smith announced that, beginning in October 1975, the church training program would include something "new" to Providence – adult ongoing study groups. These groups would study topics of their own selection and have a permanent group leader and temporary study leaders for each topic. By taking part in teaching and leading the groups, those involved would be learning skills that would become a valuable part of their Christian growth and service.

In September, Providence said bon voyage and good luck to George Hamilton, IV as he prepared to leave for an extended tour of the United Kingdom. George was going to undertake the longest concert tour ever made by an American performer in the British Isles – 42 cities. While there, he would also videotape his fifth television series for the BBC and complete recording of a major BBC Radio series on the history of the railroad.

There were two celebrations on Sunday, October 5, 1975. First, it was Staff Appreciation Sunday. Second, it was the seventh anniversary for Henry and Jan Crouch. As deacon chair Bart Hodges stated, *Let's give them an extra thanks.*

September and October were budget assessment, study and presentation months at Providence. In early October, the church approved a 1976 budget of \$411,945 with the theme, "Decision '76: Christian Stewards Deciding For Tomorrow." November 16 was set as All The Way Day for pledging the budget.

During the November 9 vesper hour, Providence welcomed two guest missionaries, Davis and Mary Saunders. Davis was an Area Secretary for Eastern and Southern Africa for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, and they served in Africa from 1951-1973. A reception was held in their honor following the vesper hour.

The annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held November 30-December 5, 1975. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was \$12,500, the highest up to that date.

On December 14, the Sanctuary Choir presented Leonard Van Camp's "Christmas Music From Colonial America." Lowell Dotson directed, and Dennis Stabler played the harpsichord. For the vesper service, the graded choirs sang about the birth of Jesus. On December 21, "Carols and Songs for Christmastide" featured the Providence singers in colonial dress and in a colonial setting. The service concluded with the annual Candlelight Service.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1975, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Albert Ambrose, Associate, Department of Renewal Evangelism, Home Mission Board

Dr. Claude U. Broach, Director, Ecumenical Institute of Belmont Abbey and Wake Forest University

Dr. Perry Crouch, Ex. Secy., NC Baptist State Convention

Rev. Randy Robinson, Associate Minister

Rev. Davis Saunders, Missionary to Africa

Dr. Edwin Young, Pastor, First Baptist, Columbia, SC

The year 1976 began with the announcement that Sam Rutland would chair the New Growth Fund Campaign and Clarence Adams and Gary Williams would chair the 1977 Budget Campaign. In

addition, long-term financing for \$1,500,000 had been committed by Home Federal Savings and Loan for the building program.

The guest speaker at the January 11, 1976, vesper service was Gerald Gardner, a jungle missionary pilot for JAARS in Panama. Gerald, who had named his plane "Friendship of the Carolinas," was married to Nancy Wilson, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Grady Wilson.

January 1976 was filled with concerns — the letting of bids and selecting a construction company to build the new sanctuary and the organ design and fund-raising campaign. It was estimated that the organ would cost at least \$100,000 and it was the task of committee chair Leroy Hendricks and his associates to raise the funds.

America's Bicentennial Year was 1976. Thus, Providence and other Southern Baptists developed the theme, "Let Christ's Freedom Ring." As a part of this theme, Ron Bayless presented a series of courses and seminars throughout 1976 to help members appreciate their Baptist heritage and beliefs.

Sunday, January 25, 1976, was Baptist Men's Day with the theme, "Spotlight on Men." During the vesper hour, the men's chorus sang, and several of the men shared testimonies of their involvement in ministries.

The February 1976 highlight was the annual Family Bible Study Course on the book of Hosea. The guest teacher was Dr. J. J. Owens, Professor of Old Testament at Southern Seminary.

"Five Fabulous Sundays" was a Sunday School attendance campaign for Southern Baptists and Providence Baptist to capitalize on the unusual occurrence of five Sundays in February 1976. The last time February had five Sundays was in 1948, and the year 2004 would be the next time for February to have five Sundays.

February 8-14, 1976, was WMU Focus Week. The women of Providence were invited by the Carmel Baptist Women to participate in a joint session to hear Nellie Pavluk, a native of Russia, speak on her Faith Ministry of getting Bibles to Christian churches behind the Iron Curtain.

In called conference on February 22, 1976, the church voted to accept the low bid of \$1,007,000 given by the Laxton Construction Company for the erection of the new sanctuary with an estimated construction time of one year. The church also voted to engage the architect to complete plans for the renovation of the present sanctuary

into educational space. The Laxton Construction Company agreed to do the renovation at 4-6% above cost.

The Music Ministry presented three specials in February and March. On February 22, a mini-concert of Christian folk music featured Chip Hamilton and Brian Polk. On February 29, "Let George Do It," a patriotic musical about George Washington, was presented by the combined youth choirs and enjoyed by everyone. On March 6, the Furman University Singers, under the direction of Bingham Vick, Jr., were celebrating their 30th Anniversary with a series of bicentennial concerts in four states. Appearing with the 80 Singers were the Furman Folk Ensemble and Furman Chamber Singers. Church member Jane Shannon was one of the Singers.

March 1-7, 1976, was the WMU Week of Prayer for Home Missions with the theme, "A New Birth of Freedom." The Annie Armstrong Offering goal was \$1,600, \$3 per church family. The two guest speakers were Lenora Cave, wife of St. John's Baptist Pastor Julian Cave, and Dr. Elias Golonka, employed by the Language Missions Department of the Home Mission Board as a Missionary Associate to Internationals in New York City.

The March 4, *Pastorgram* announced the resignation of Educational Secretary Bobby Wilson, a valuable staff member for three years, who had accepted employment with Charlotte Memorial Hospital. Jo Ann McLelland became the new Secretary.

On Sunday evening, March 21, 1976, there was a special Ordination Service for Henry Crouch, Jr. Bill had been serving as Youth Minister at Greenwood Forest Baptist Church in Cary for three years, and in May he would become Greenwood's Associate Pastor. He was also studying for his Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Baptist Seminary. Participating in Bill's Ordination Service were: Dr. W. Perry Crouch, Dr. Randall Lolley and Dr. Grady Wilson. Bill was the first of Henry and Jan Crouch's sons to be ordained into the ministry.

Two significant events took place on Sunday, March 28. First, the Annie Armstrong Offering goal for Home Missions was \$1,600. Second, the Ground Breaking Service for the new sanctuary was held at 11:45 am. Architect T. B. Hawkins had carefully drawn the design that would represent Providence as a unique institution in the Charlotte community. Home Federal Savings and Loan Company

loaned Providence \$1,550,000 capital as an investment in the community. Laxton Construction Company made the low bid that put Providence in the position to proceed immediately with construction. It was a great day for the Providence congregation.

April 1976 began with the theme, "Crank Up For Revival" with guest evangelist Dr. W. Randall Lolley, President of Southeastern Baptist Seminary. Dr. Lolley was Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem prior to becoming President of the Seminary. He spoke each evening and also participated in sessions for all age groups. The revival music was planned and led by Lowell Dotson.

During the week of March 25, the Ladies Handbell Choir participated and did very well in the North Carolina Handbell Festival in Greensboro. Twenty-five church choirs from across North Carolina participated. The guest conductor was Donald Allured from St. Charles, Louisiana.

On April 11, 1976, the Sanctuary Choir performed Handel's "Messiah," conducted by Lowell Dotson. The organ accompanist was Dennis Stabler, and the soloists were Melanie Myers and Tom Richbourg, Jr. The Charlotte Chamber String Ensemble, consisting of violins I and II, cello and viola, added to the beauty of the concert.

Sunday, May 2, 1976, was Youth Sunday. The Senior Minister was Barbara Helms, and the Associate Pastor was Cindi Norris. Skipper Haire served as Minister of Education, and David Cromer was the Minister of Music. The Sunday School classes were taught by young people and other youth served in a variety of service roles.

The May 7, 1976, *Pastorgram* announced the resignation of Associate Pastor Randy Robinson who had accepted the call of the Memorial Baptist Church of Arlington, Virginia. Memorial had a membership of 615, with an average Sunday School attendance of 250. As Pastor Crouch stated, *We knew it was going to happen..... but now that it has happened we have mixed feelings.* Sunday night, May 9, the congregation held a reception for the Robinsons and wished them well.

It was also announced on May 7 that Marvin Cameron, a second-year seminary student, had been employed as a full-time Summer Youth Worker and would begin on June 5. He lived in the

youth building and directed all summer youth activities under the direction of Ron Bayless.

Providence's 22nd Anniversary Homecoming was on Sunday, May 23, 1976, with games and fellowship beginning at 4:00 pm. The meal was at 6:00 pm at the picnic area.

At 7:30 pm on May 23, the Junior Choirs presented "Let George Do It" at the Matthews Baptist Church, featuring the Vesper Girls' Choir and the Kingsmen Boys' Choir. They were accompanied by Glenna Shepherd (piano), Gordon Shepherd (guitar) and Leslie Webster (percussion).

On June 6, the Handbell Choir presented a concert of patriotic music featuring beautiful arrangements of American folk hymns accompanied by harp and organ. A key part of the concert featured the girls' choir.

The two big June 1976 events were Vacation Bible School and Day Camp for ages 6-12. Marvin Cameron, Summer Youth Worker, directed the Day Camp.

The June 17 *Pastorgram* carried the resignation of organist Dennis Stabler. Effective July 25, 1976, Dennis would become Organist-Choirmaster at Sharon United Methodist Church which would enable him to further his interest in and dedication to the field of church music. He would be greatly missed.

In the June 24, 1976 *Pastorgram*, Pastor Crouch announced a concept for staff restructuring that he felt would give Providence new life, closer supervision and more creative planning. The new positions were Business Manager, Minister with Children, Minister with Youth, and Minister with Adults. It was hoped that the plans could be in place by the fall of 1976.

The July 7 and July 24 *Pastorgrams* brought the announcements of two more staff changes. First, Jo Ann McLelland, Educational Secretary, resigned and was replaced by Clara Peterson. Second, Ron Bayless, Minister of Education since March 15, 1973, resigned to accept the call as Minister of Education at Eudora Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. As Pastor Crouch stated at the Bayless reception: *They have played an important role in our growth and development as a church. We are grateful for their ministry and appreciate the faithful years of service in our midst.*

Anne Cole, a student at UNC Greensboro, was the guest organist on July 11 and 18. On July 25, Dennis Stabler was organist for the last time prior to assuming his duties as Organist-Choirmaster at Sharon United Methodist Church. Lowell Dotson announced on July 25 that Roye Lynn Kulik would be returning as church organist on August 15, 1976.

The July 14, 1976, *Pastorgram* announced that the *Voice of Providence* had been silenced due to inflation. The *Voice* was a 30-minute Sunday morning program aired over WBT Radio from 1974-76. Instead, the church tape ministry was expanded for shut-ins and other interested persons.

On July 21, calls were extended to two new staff members. First, Edward E. Landrus, from the First Baptist Church of Morganton where he had been Minister of Education from 1967-1976, would become the new Minister with Children. Second, Bill Andrews was coming as Providence's first Minister with Adults. Bill had served as a missionary to Chile for 26 years and was on a two-year furlough. Both positions would be effective September 1, 1976.

Two guest ministers filled the pulpit on Sunday, August 1, 1976. The morning service speaker was Dr. W. Perry Crouch, former Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention and father of the pastor. During the vesper hour, the speaker was Dr. Lawrence Childs, Director of Missions for the Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

The July 28, 1976, *Pastorgram* stated that a call had been extended to Rev. Steve Hoffman to be the new Minister of Youth, effective September 1. Steve had previously served as Minister of Education and Youth at Western Avenue Baptist Church in Statesville and, since 1972, as Minister of Youth at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Raleigh. His acceptance completed the staff reorganization for 1976.

In the August 4, 1976 *Pastorgram*, the Music Ministry and the Building Committee announced a Memorial Pipe Organ Gift for the permanent sanctuary to honor Mr. and Mrs. B. B. Walker and Mrs. N. S. Colee and in memory of Mr. N. S. Colee. These were the parents of Mr. and Mrs. Harry C. Moss, Jr. The Moss and Walker families were charter members.

The memorial pipe organ was built by the Schantz Organ Company of Orville, Ohio, with 45 ranks, three manuals, and 2,600 individual pipes from pencil size to 16-feet long. The organ chambers were accessible so that individuals could walk around and see the mechanical parts and pipes in action.

This gift from the Moss family permitted Providence to use the accumulated organ funds to purchase a sanctuary piano, choir robes, hymnals and altar fixtures. The congregation was grateful for this very generous gift from the Moss family.

Sunday, August 15, 1976, was the last day for Summer Youth Minister Marvin Cameron who was returning to Southern Seminary. His last duty was the vesper hour sermon. As Pastor Crouch stated: *Marvin has done a wonderful job working with our youth this summer.....We want to officially express our deep appreciation for his fine leadership.*

Another Providence "first" took place on Sunday, August 15, when three women deacons were chosen. They were Dorothea Compton, Gertrude Royal and Janice Uttley.

At the August 22 vesper hour, the Youth Choirs sang selections from "Lightshine," "Revolutionary Ideas" and a patriotic collage called "What Price Freedom" by Derric Johnson. The concert was followed by the last summer ice cream fellowship.

September 1976 was a time of transition due to starting a new church year, adjusting to three new staff ministers and watching the building program take shape. Rev. Bill Andrews, new Minister with Adults, preached the September 26 morning sermon. Rev. Steve Hoffman, new Minister to Youth, conducted the vesper service.

On Sunday, October 3, 1976, Henry Crouch celebrated his eighth anniversary as Senior Minister. The September 26 **Pastorgram** encouraged the congregation to support the pastor by attending church on Sunday.

Ed Landrus, new Minister with Children, started a children's worship program the first Sunday of each month, beginning October 3, 1976. The object of the service was to teach the children what worship was and to experience it. They would attend the regular church worship service on the other Sundays.

In the October 6 **Pastorgram**, Pastor Crouch invited the congregation to join him in a real "Adventure in Faith" during the

1976-77 church year. *The challenge that beckons us to come forth is the greatest I have ever faced in my ministry and excites me with its possibilities.*

It was announced on October 20, 1976, that a memorial gift of the Pulpit Bible and Stand had been made in memory of Sarah Lou Wood by the Connie Andrews Sunday School Class. Another memorial of the Communion Service was given in memory of Mrs. Vernice W. Armes by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stokes. Mrs. Armes was the mother of Mrs. Stokes.

October and November 1976 were budget preparation and pledge commitment months to support the 1977 budget of \$450,000. November 21 was Victory Sunday, with December 1 scheduled as a wrap-up day for the budget process.

The annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held November 28-December 5. Rev. Bill Andrews shared his first-hand missionary experiences in Chile and the importance of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. The Providence goal was \$12,000, which was symbolized in the baptistry wreath. Each of the 120 lights represented \$100 in gifts.

The November 8, 1976 *Pastorgram* announced that membership had reached 2,000, placing Providence in the top 10 churches in the North Carolina Baptist Convention and third in Charlotte. In effect, Providence's membership had doubled in the past nine years.

The pulpit on Sunday, November 28, was filled by Rev. Bill Andrews in the morning services and seminary student Dennis Kirkley in the vesper hour. Dennis and his wife, Janet, had spent the summer in Scotland and shared their work experiences through a slide program. Dennis was one of seven Providence members enrolled in a seminary. At Southern Seminary with Dennis were Sam Rutland, Steve Smith and Marvin Cameron. At Southeastern Seminary were Bill Crouch, Robert Smith and Hal Melton.

Another staff change took place the first week in December when Education Secretary Clara Peterson resigned. She was replaced by Teeny Thompson.

In a regular business meeting on Sunday, December 5, the church adopted an amendment to the Bylaws creating the position of Deacon Emeritus. Jim Owen, secretary of the deacon body,

placed the names of Dr. Amos Bumgardner and Russ Tucker as the first candidates to be nominated as Deacons Emeritus.

On December 12 in both morning services, the Sanctuary Choir presented a Christmas concert of selected anthems along with the traditional Christmas carols. At the vesper hour, the graded choirs presented their Christmas music, followed on December 15 by the handbell concert. The final music program of 1976 was the annual Candlelight Service on December 19.

The 1976 church year ended with Student Day at Christmas featuring college and university students leading every facet of the services. At the vesper hour, Sam Rutland, Jr., a ministerial student at Southern Seminary, preached the sermon. All the students made their families and congregation proud.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1976, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile & Minister to Adults

Dr. Robert G. Bratcher, Resident Associate, Translation Department, American Bible Society

Dr. Lawrence Childs, Director of Missions, Mecklenburg Baptist Association

Dr. Thomas E. Corts, President, Wingate College

Dr. W. Perry Crouch, Former Executive Secretary, North Carolina Baptist Convention

Mr. Gerald Gardner, JAARS Jungle Missionary Pilot

Dr. Elias Golonka, Missionary, Language Missions Department, Home Mission Board

Mr. Dennis Kirkley, Student, Southern Baptist Seminary

Dr. W. Randall Lolley, President, Southeastern Baptist Seminary

Rev. Warren Mallard, Director, Church Development, Mecklenburg Baptist Association

In the January 3, 1977 **Pastorgram**, Pastor Crouch summarized 1976 as follows:

1976 started poorly for us but gained momentum and we closed it on the highest peak in many a year. We had disruption with staff changes, several policies that had to be ironed out, decisions on a building program and a leveling out that was hard to turn upward. We start 1977 at an

exciting stage with the best spirit since I've been your pastor. Our staff has been a big factor in this new upsurge. Join us as we make 1977 'A Year of Spiritual Priorities.'

The first 1977 activity was the annual Bible Study Course on the book of Romans with guest teacher Dr. John M. Lewis, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Raleigh. Prior to joining First Baptist of Raleigh, Dr. Lewis was Associate Professor of Religion and Director of Student Religious Activities at Meredith College.

On January 9, 1977, the church voted to: (1) Purchase a pipe organ for the new sanctuary, (2) Approve renovation plans for the existing sanctuary for educational space, and (3) Purchase a stained glass window for the new sanctuary.

On January 13-14, the ministers held a two-day retreat at the pastor's Lake Lure cottage. They returned with two major goals for the 1977 church year: (1) Serve the Lord at Providence and commit to their call to be His church in the Charlotte community, and (2) Place an emphasis on people – our members as His body in this community – and the outsider who needs to know the Lord.

January 30, 1977, was Baptist Men's Day with the men serving as leaders of worship and music. The guest speaker was General Norman Gaddis of Winston-Salem, who entered the service in 1942 and retired in 1976. He was held as a prisoner of war by North Vietnam from 1967-1973. On February 1, the women of the church studied the book, *A Sense of Spring*, taught by Rev. Lloyd B. Hales, Director of Christian Social Ministries in Mecklenburg County.

February 13 was Scout Sunday, and Troop 166 called Providence its home. Bob Norman was Scout Master, with Clarence Adams serving as the Institutional Representative to the Troop.

The February 14 *Pastorgram* announced that Providence member Noelle Player was starring in "Vasalissa" at the Children's Theatre for three days. Today Noelle is acting on Broadway after starting her career in Charlotte.

In the February 21, 1977 *Pastorgram*, Pastor Crouch announced two staff changes. First, Lowell Dotson's title was changed to Minister of Music and Outreach with expanded duties to include promotion, public relations, new prospects and coordinating the visitation program. Second, R. C. Bryson, son of a Presbyterian minister and General Manager of Biggers Brothers Company for 18

years, was hired as Business Manager. His duties were to supervise maintenance, the buildings, the yard, finances, inventories, purchases and the kitchen.

March 13-19, 1977, was Home Missions Week with the theme, "Our Land for Christ." The Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$11,250,000 and the Providence goal \$1,800. The guest speaker was Lloyd Corder, Director of the Division of Associational Missions of the Home Mission Board. He employed ventriloquism to fascinate and teach missions by using a wooden dummy, "Joe the Baptist," to great advantage in presenting his message.

The WMU was in the spotlight on March 9, 1977. After the family supper, "Light and Life," a WMU focus pageant written by Gertrude Royal and Patty Walker was presented.

The 1977 revival was held March 27-30 with guest speaker Dr. Gene Watterson, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Shelby. Lowell Dotson conducted the revival music in conjunction with the Providence choirs. As Pastor Crouch stated in the *Pastorgram*: *Revival may be outdated and old fashioned, yet it provides for us the opportunities to reach out to our community and share Christ.*

For Easter, the Sanctuary Choir presented John Steiner's "The Crucifixion," a meditation on the passion of the Holy Redeemer. Soloists were Lowell Dotson and Richard Kennedy from the UNCC music faculty. Roye Lynn Kulik was the organist.

Two Providence youth received the headlines in March 1977. Ginger Player was a violinist for the Portland Symphony Orchestra. Al Ledford was selected as a General Assembly Page, and part of his duties would be assisting Representative Roy Spoon from Mecklenburg County.

On April 20 in special business session, the church voted to renovate the old sanctuary. The Long-term Finance Committee reported that \$168,000 was available for the renovation, and the Building Committee received permission to sign a contract with Laxton Construction Company for \$163,000. The last service in the old sanctuary was May 22, Providence's 23rd Anniversary and the end of the eighteenth year of using the building for worship. The renovation project began on May 23. Worship for the summer was held in the fellowship hall, with pews and organ moved into place by May 29.

In addition, the congregation approved establishing a committee of 20 to conduct a feasibility study for a recreational area and future activities building. The committee chair was Jim Crawford.

Lowell Dotson announced in the May 2 *Pastorgram* that a new hymnal, *Hymns for the Living Church*, had been selected. In addition, the Music Committee had selected the colors and stoles for new choir robes. Finally, a 6-foot Kawai concert piano for the new sanctuary had been donated by the Ken Lail family.

It was also announced on May 2 that Bonnie Adams, the pastor's Secretary, had been granted her Advanced Secretary's Certification from the Sunday School Board. In 1976, she had received her Basic Certification. The courses were held at Ridgecrest.

Sunday, May 22, was Providence's 23rd Birthday Celebration and the last service in the temporary sanctuary. The 1977 Homecoming featured Gordon Weekley, Providence's first pastor, and the charter members, followed by dinner-on-the-grounds. The choirs' theme was "A Day of Celebration and Remembrance," with the Sanctuary Choir, the Providence singers and the Handbell Choir all participating in the morning services. At the vesper hour a Memorial Service program of sacred music was presented with George Eison and Melanie Myers as the featured soloists. The choirs and soloists were accompanied by a string ensemble, harp and organ. It was truly a special day of celebration and remembrance.

The June 6, 1977, *Pastorgram* announced that beginning June 10, Marvin Cameron would be the Summer Youth Worker, his second summer at Providence. Marvin was a graduate of Union University with a degree in Religion and had just completed his second year at Southern Seminary working toward a Master of Divinity Degree.

The same *Pastorgram* announced that Bobby Jones had been honored as the "most consistent" player in the National Basketball Association with the Denver Nuggets. Bobby received a cash prize which he immediately gave as a tribute to God who had entrusted him with the talent.

June and July 1977 were filled with normal church functions and vacation time. However, the July 11 *Pastorgram* announced that Pastor Crouch had been elected as Secretary of the International Conference of Police Chaplains at the annual conference meeting in

Indianapolis. He was the first southerner to serve on the Executive Committee, and his role as Police Chaplain centered around counseling, hospital visitation and emergency situations.

During July and August 1977, members prepared to participate in the All-Charlotte, Baptist Sponsored, Evangelistic Crusade at the Charlotte Coliseum September 18-25. Another function was the Evangelism Conference on August 9 at Pritchard Memorial with featured speaker T. Dorrel Hall, Executive Director of the James Robison Evangelistic Association. The conference purpose was to teach Christians how to be more effective in personal evangelism.

Randall G. "Randy" Moore died on July 30, 1977. As Lowell Dotson stated in the August 1 *Pastorgram*:

It's hard to give up people with whom you have worked and have been so involved in the PBC Music Program. The loss of Randy Moore was a terrific shock. He helped me in so many programs here and was such a talented young man. We shall miss him in so many ways.

September 1977 was State Missions Month. It began with a season of prayer and offerings, and emphasis was placed on the Ministry of Outreach in North Carolina. The North Carolina offering goal was \$1,385,000.

To encourage growth and make plans for 1978, the WMU held a get-acquainted tea at Jan Crouch's home on September 25. The new WMU theme was:

Be A Knowbody,

Be Informed!

Be A Dobody,

Be Involved!

October was budget preparation and approval month. During the October 15 vesper hour, the congregation approved a 1978 unified budget of \$575,000. At the October 23 vesper hour, the Providence Singers presented a dramatic new musical written by Buryl Red entitled "Bright New Wings." The youth did a marvelous job.

Sunday, October 30, was High Attendance Day in Sunday School with a goal of 900 in attendance. It was also the last Sunday in which the worship services were held in the fellowship hall.

At 7:00 pm on November 5, 1977, an hour of sacred music preceding the wedding of Deborah Jeanne Iley and Richard Hodde

was presented by Dennis Stabler (organ), Dr. Robert Maddox (trumpet), Pol Sofras (harp), and Jerry Helton (tenor).

The first worship service in the new sanctuary was Sunday, November 6, 1977. As Lowell Dotson stated in the *Pastorgram*: *Our people have waited a long time for this day. It will certainly be different from anything we have had in the past.* In addition, the old renovated sanctuary was complete, and for the first time there was plenty of space for Sunday School.

November and December 1977 were Foreign Mission Emphases months, which culminated in the Annie Armstrong Christmas Offering with the theme, "Let the Church Reach Out: Bold Missions Trust." The national goal for 1977 was \$34,000,000, a 20% increase over 1976, and the Providence goal was \$14,000.

November 13, 1977, was a special day – dedication of the new sanctuary! As Pastor Crouch announced in the November 7 *Pastorgram*: *It is finally finished! Sunday we will pause to dedicate our new sanctuary to the worship of God. It is not only historical – it becomes a holy moment for us as a congregation.* The guest speaker was Dr. Cecil Ray, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Another special guest was organist Robert B. King of Burlington who had served as Organ Consultant. Mr. King played at the Dedication Service and the Public Dedication at 3:00 pm.

1977 SANCTUARY DESIGN FEATURES

The architectural details of the new sanctuary building are Colonial in design to conform to the original buildings and later additions, but the interior functional arrangement is unique for Colonial buildings. It clearly meets one of the requirements set out in the beginning by the Building Committee that the design be one that is 'uniquely Providence.'

The center focal point of all seating areas is the pulpit platform which contains the pulpit and communion table. The cross-shaped room provides seating on the main floor and in a balcony on three sides of the platform, with the choir on the fourth side. The communion table is in the exact center of the crossing and under the large chandelier. In all types of worship

services, the congregation will be surrounding the central worship center at the pulpit platform area.

In this plan all distances to the worship center are very short so that vision and sound will be excellent.

The service of Baptism will occur in a baptistry located directly behind the choir and just below the stained glass window. Sliding doors will cover the baptistry opening when not in use. The back lighted stained glass window will be equally effective during day or night services.

The minister and the congregation should experience a feeling of closeness that would not be possible in a conventional rectangular building with the pulpit at one end. This, together with the warmth of the red carpet floors, deep rich walnut stained woodwork, and red velour on the pew seats, will create a feeling of warmth and togetherness seldom achieved in a large sanctuary.

The sound system is a precisely engineered distribution system, designed to distribute the sound evenly throughout all seating areas.

Electronic equipment is installed to permit taping of services, radio and television broadcasts, and closed circuit broadcasts to other areas of the building.

The sanctuary connects to the main lobby which serves as the "hub" area for all activity. One enters the main portico into the lobby, which serves the sanctuary narthex, the offices, the library, conference room, fellowship hall area, and classroom areas.

A new choir rehearsal studio, robing rooms, and music offices are at a lower level, with separate entrance, behind the pulpit area.

The pipe organ, built by the Schantz Organ Company of Orville, Ohio, is contained in two large organ tone chambers behind the choir and on each side of the stained glass window.

The seating capacity is approximately 970 seats, with 752 on the main floor and 218 in the balconies.

THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW

The focal point of the stained glass window is a wooden cross. It is an empty cross expressing our faith in a risen Christ. It is a reminder of John 3:16. Secondary focal points are the crown, symbolic of Christ our King, and Alpha and Omega signifying that Christ is the beginning and the end.

At the apex of the window is a dove with a three-rayed nimbus (cloud). The dove represents the Holy Spirit descending and the nimbus is a symbol of the Trinity.

At the base of the cross are the tablets with the Ten Commandments given to Moses. The three Easter lilies symbolize the Trinity and the Resurrection.

From the base of the cross grows a delicate Byzantine vine, representing the Tree of Life with symbols of the Christian faith on the branches. Symbols beginning at the top, from left to right: (1) Holy Bible – divine authorship of God's Holy Word; (2) Praying Hands – worship, adoration, prayer; (3) Star of Bethlehem – heavenly wisdom, Christ's birth; (4) Harp – music, joy, worship in heaven; (5) Lamp – truth, knowledge; (6) Butterfly – resurrection, life after death; (7) Cornucopia – bounty of God; (8) Caduceus – Jesus said, *I am the Light of the World*; (9) Fish – early Christian symbol used to feed multitudes; (10) IHS Scroll – sacred monogram of Christ.

The letters of the Greek word ICHTHUS (fish) are the initial letters for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.

The border is a vine with grapes and grape leaves symbolic of Christ, the vine, and we are the branches, dependent on Him.

In color the window is rich and jewel-like with deeper, mystical blues in the center, graduating to lighter blues around the perimeter. Each symbol is silhouetted against a rich red or blue background.

The window is interior lighted. It was designed by Wilbur H. Burnham of Burnham Studios located near Boston, Massachusetts.

THE ORGAN

The organ was designed and built by the Schantz Organ Company of Orville, Ohio. The organ stop list specifications were planned by Robert King, Organ Consultant and Organ-

Choirmaster of the First Presbyterian Church of Burlington, North Carolina. The instrument is comprised of over 2,500 pipes and includes four divisions – Great, Positiv, Swell and Pedal. While the unencased divisions (Great, Positiv and Pedal) are designed along the lines of the German Classical organ, the enclosed division (Swell) is influenced by the French Romantic organ of the 19th Century. There is also a solo trumpet stop (“Fanfare Trumpet”) which is typical of English Cathedral organs.

Facing the chambers, the baptistry and stained glass window are flanked on the right side by the Great and Pedal divisions and the left side Chamber contains the Positiv and Swell divisions.

The pipe organ was a gift to Providence Baptist Church by the Harry C. Moss, Jr. family.

At a called business meeting on November 13, 1977, Steve Smith, a second-year student at Southern Seminary, requested that Providence license him to preach so that he could become an interim pastor in Kentucky. Gary Kaufman also requested that Providence recommend him to Southeastern Seminary as a ministerial student. Both requests were approved by the congregation.

December 1977 began with the Organ Dedication Recital played by Bobby King, the Organ Consultant, who worked closely with the Music Ministry in the planning and installation of the Schantz organ.

On December 11, the Sanctuary Choir and Women’s Handbell Choir presented a Christmas music program. That evening at the vesper hour, the Junior Choirs presented their Christmas music program entitled “Christmas at Providence,” which consisted of sacred and popular Christmas carols. The Music Ministry’s year concluded on December 18 with the annual Candlelight Service of lessons and carols.

During the absence of Pastor Crouch in 1977, the pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Minister with Adults

Dr. Nathan Brooks, Director of Church Programs, North Carolina Baptist State Convention

Mr. Marvin Cameron, Summer Youth Worker, Southern Seminary

Rev. Lloyd Corder, Director, Division of Associational Missions, Home Mission Board

Dr. W. Perry Crouch, Retired Secretary, North Carolina State Baptist Convention

General Norman Gaddis, Retired, United States Air Force

Dr. John M. Lewis, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Raleigh

Rev. Ed Landrus, Minister with Children

Dr. Cecil Ray, Secretary, North Carolina Baptist State Convention

Dr. William T. Roberson, Missionary to Philippines

Rev. Tommy Tucker, Pastor, Sardis Presbyterian Church

Dr. Gene Watterson, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Shelby

Dr. Craven Williams, President, Gardner-Webb College

January 1978 was a busy month, beginning with the junior high lock-in on January 13. This was followed on January 21-22 by the Marriage Enrichment Seminar at Camp Caraway. On January 24 the Baptist Metro Dinner was held at Providence. The senior high ski trip to Beech Mountain was January 26-27. The month ended with the annual January Bible Study with Dr. J. J. "Red Top" Owens, Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at Southern Seminary, teaching the book of Exodus.

February 1978 began with Scout Sunday honoring George Adams, who was awarded the Eagle Scout Award, the first Troop 166 scout to receive this honor. Only about 1% of all scouts earn the Eagle Award. Providence saluted him as one of its finest young people who was deeply involved in the life of the church.

The Providence women, sponsored by the WMU, conducted eight Bible Studies throughout the community during February, some in homes and others in community institutions. Some WMU leaders served as teachers: Rena Smith, Louise Chapman, Carolyn Stroud, Joan Lovell, Nancy Coppage, Allie Burnette, Peggy Brown and Gertrude Royal.

The February 20, 1978, *Pastorgram* announced the purchase of a new 15-passenger van. The Triple L's Club was the first group to use the van. They sent a letter that stated: *A group of Senior Citizens living in the Cotswold area wish to thank Providence*

Baptist Church for providing transportation to Sunday worship and to our special weekday meetings. It carries all of us..... The van was purchased for outreach ministry and added an extra dimension of availability and flexibility to serve the Lord in the community.

March began with the Christian Women's United Day of Prayer which included six area churches as guests. This was followed by the March Week of Prayer for Home Missions with guest speaker Rev. Leonard G. Irwin from the Home Mission Board. A highlight of the Week of Prayer was a one-person monologue on the life of Annie Armstrong by Janice Uttley.

The March 1978 highlight was the spring revival which was preceded by cottage meetings and prayer sessions in homes. The guest revivalist was Dr. Ian Walker, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach, Florida. Congregational singing was led by Ray Harris, Minister of Music, First Baptist Church of Murphy, North Carolina.

On March 29, 1978, Providence participated in a very special worship experience, a drama entitled the "Search" written by Lenora Cave. The drama was a moving portrayal of one woman's encounter with Jesus Christ and raised questions about the role of the church in dealing with themes such as forgiveness and caring. Mary, a woman personally acquainted with Jesus, seeks a place of acceptance among believers. The "Search" was preceded by a speaking chorus giving the actual Biblical account of the story of Mary, a saga symbolic of people everywhere who hope.

On April 6, 1978, a concert by the Pensacola Junior College Concert Choir consisted of 40 members, directed by William Smith. The group delivered a beautiful concert of choral music.

The April 3, 1978, *Pastorgram* announced that Dr. Grady Wilson had suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized in Manning, South Carolina. He would convalesce at their cabin in Manning after leaving the hospital.

The WMU participated in the April 11 Associational Annual Session at Eastern Hills Baptist Church. The guest speaker was Dr. Frances Greenway, missionary to Rhodesia, who shared her mission experiences.

On April 8 during the pastor's absence, Providence welcomed back to the pulpit Dr. Randy Robinson, former Associate Pastor and

Minister of Youth. At the time, Dr. Robinson was the Pastor of Memorial Baptist Church in Arlington, Virginia. He was received with open arms by the congregation.

During the April 23 vesper hour, the Music Ministry sponsored a Sacred Piano Concert by John Palmer-Smith. John, a music assistant at Pritchard Memorial, played a program of music featuring gospel hymns he had arranged for the piano, such as *In The Garden*, *He Touched Me*, and *Near To The Heart of God*.

The April 24, 1978, *Pastorgram* announced that Keithen M. Tucker, a first-year student at Southeastern Seminary, had accepted the challenge to be Providence's Summer Associate, beginning June 1. His role would involve recreational programming, Vacation Bible School, youth and children's programs, and hospital visitation.

Other staff changes were announced: Darlene Martin assumed the position of Education Secretary replacing Patsy Brooks who was moving to Winston-Salem. Church Organist Roye Lynn Kulik resigned effective June 11 to move to Charleston, South Carolina. Roye Lynn had been a valuable asset to Providence's Music Ministry for almost nine years and would be missed.

Sunday, May 21, 1978, was Providence's 24th Anniversary and was celebrated with a church-wide picnic following the 11:00 am worship service. The special guests were the 51 active charter members. The weather was ideal, and a huge crowd participated. The celebration ended with a vesper hour Homecoming Organ Recital by Dr. Donald Hustad, Professor of Music and Organ at Southern Seminary. Dr. Hustad served as organist for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Director for "Crusader Men" Hour of Decision, 1961-67, and was the editor of the church hymnal, *Hymns for the Living Church*. During the morning worship service, Dr. Hustad furnished the prelude, offertory and postlude music.

Robert Smith, who had just completed his second year at Southeastern Seminary, preached the May 28 vesper hour message. He, wife Carolyn and their family had been active members of Providence for many years.

In May 1978, Jackie Cromer, WMU Director, announced that a new dimension of Providence was being developed – church-wide

telephone prayer chains. These chains would enable many people to pray for a single request within the shortest time.

The Music Ministry was very active in June 1978, beginning with the June 4 vesper hour concert featuring the Providence Bell choir and Junior girls' Choir. The bells, harp, and organ presented selections of American Folk Hymns. The vesper Girls' choir was directed by March Iley. On June 11, the sanctuary Choir presented "A Program of Special Music" with selections ranging from the classics to the spirituals. It was a magnificent performance.

The annual youth Mission Trip North was June 17-25 to Philadelphia and Cherry Hills, New Jersey. Twenty youth, supervised by Lowell Dotson, Steve and Gearlene Hoffman, sang concerts, helped with Bible Schools and helped repair an inner city church in downtown Philadelphia.

In a business session on June 25, 1978, the church approved the staff request for a one-year Symposium for Churchmanship to train 18 persons for church leadership positions. It also approved a Search Committee for a new Minister with Adults to replace Bill Andrews who had resigned to return to Chile as a missionary.

Lowell Dotson announced that Gail Trull would be the church organist for July, and David and Marty Jowett would supply during August. On July 1, 1978, Lowell celebrated nine productive years as Minister of Music.

During the July 9 vesper hour, Rev. Wade D. Tucker delivered a sermon entitled "The Everlasting God." The July 10, 1978, *Pastorgram* announced that the Search Committee, chaired by Austin Moody, had selected Rev. Tucker as their choice for Minister with Adults, effective September 1, 1978. At the time, Rev. Tucker was Associate Minister of the First Baptist Church of Henderson, North Carolina. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had a strong interest in personal, marriage and family enrichment.

The July 24, 1978, *Pastorgram* reported that the Ron Bayless family (former Minister of Education) had relocated to the First Baptist Church of Lakeland, Florida, where Ron would serve as Minister of Education.

While Pastor Crouch was vacationing in August 1978, the pulpit was filled by Dr. Fred B. Bentley, President of Mars Hill College. He was followed by Dr. Conrad Johnson, Pastor of Salem Baptist

Church of Salem, Virginia. At the August 6 vesper hour, Summer Associate Keithen Tucker spoke on "Accepting the Challenge." It was Keithen's last week prior to returning to Southeastern Seminary.

The August 14 *Pastorgram* announced that Dr. and Mrs. Joe Craig had been appointed lay missionaries to the Caribbean, the first lay missionaries appointed from Providence since the new program started with Southern Baptists. They paid their own expenses and gave the two weeks of service under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Board.

On Sunday, August 27, 1978, an Ordination Service was held for Sam Rutland, III, a graduate of Wake Forest University and Southern Seminary where he received the Master of Divinity Degree. At the time, he was serving as Area Director of Young Life in Raleigh. Sam's family were long-term, active members of Providence.

Sunday, September 10, 1978, was Bill Andrews Day, and he preached the vesper hour sermon. Following the service, a reception honored Bill and Connie, and they were given a special love offering. They would soon return to the Chile mission field.

In early September the church staff sent every family a Mission Action Survey along with a Mission Action Statement. The statement was as follows:

Mission action is the organized effort of a church to minister and to witness to persons of special need or circumstance who, without this special effort, are often bypassed in the church's direct outreach activities.

The object of the Mission Survey was to identify and focus church outreach to the community. The most important result of the survey was a recommendation from the Missions Committee that Providence sponsor Candlewyck Mission on Providence Road.

Sunday, October 1, 1978, was special recognition day for Henry Crouch's tenth anniversary as pastor. There was only one morning service and a vesper hour, followed by a reception honoring the Crouchs.

The remainder of October was taken up with budget preparation, annual Mecklenburg Associational Meeting, vote on the 1979 budget, a deacon retreat and the Baptist Metro Banquet.

In addition, October was the beginning of a new church year and all the adjustments that went with it.

Two new hands-on mission projects started in November 1978: First, assisting the George Shinn Foundation in providing clothing for the families of 25 Baptist men preparing for the ministry at Fruitland Bible Institute and, second, a mission action group (the Florence Crittenton Ministry) formed to teach Sunday School there each Sunday. Providence's Baptist Young Women also began the tradition of holding one social a quarter for the women at the Florence Crittenton Home.

In November 1978, Providence had several hundred persons on its Non-Resident Members Roll and made a concentrated effort to contact them to clarify their membership status. This continues to be a problem for the church.

December 1978 began with the annual World Mission Emphasis which culminated in the Christmas Lottie Moon Offering. The Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$40,000,000 and the Providence goal \$18,000. The mission emphasis began with a message by Dr. J. D. Hughey, Secretary to Europe and the Middle East, and concluded with the "march for foreign missions," with members bringing their offerings to the church altar.

The twenty-sixth annual presentation of Handel's "Messiah" was December 3 at Ovens Auditorium. The soloists included Lowell Dotson, who sang the bass solos. On December 16 at Philadelphia Presbyterian Church in Mint Hill, Noelle Player starred as Amahl in "Amahl and the Night Visitors" by Gian-Carlo Menotti. Noelle, a 14-year-old Providence member, was well-known for her outstanding performances in theatre groups, commercials and variety shows.

December 1978 began with the budget commitment to meet the 1979 figure of \$630,000. The Christmas music season began on December 17 with a "Celebration Through Music" program featuring the Sanctuary Choir, Ensemble and Bell Choir. The vesper hour featured the Providence Singers in a program entitled "Love Came Down." On December 20, the Carol Choir produced an area premier of "Angels" by Cynthia Clawson. The performance was conducted by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by Evelyn Hinrichs.

The vesper hour on December 24 featured the annual Candlelight Service of lessons and carols followed by the beautiful candlelighting ceremony. The year closed on Sunday, December 31, 1978, with College Day at Christmas, featuring college students performing the staff roles. The three ministers were David Cromer, Bronwyn Poplin and Scott Simpson.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1978, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Albert Ambrose, Pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Rev. Bill Andrews, Minister with Adults and Missionary to Chile

Dr. Fred Bentley, President, Mars Hill College

Dr. J. D. Hughey, Foreign Mission Board

Rev. Leonard G. Irwin, Director, Home Mission Board

Rev. Conrad Johnston, Pastor, Salem Baptist, Salem, VA

Mr. Gary Kaufman, Student, Southeastern Baptist Seminary

Dr. J. J. Owens, Professor of Old Testament Interpretation, Southern Seminary

Mr. Robert Smith, Student, Southeastern Seminary

Rev. Wade Tucker, Minister with Adults

Dr. Ian Walker, Pastor, First Baptist, W. Palm Beach, Florida

January 1979 began with four adult training seminars: *The Ministry of the Deacon* (Lawrence Childs), *Resolutions for Better Living* (Betty Smith), *Teaching Skills* (Rev. Wade Tucker) and *New Member* (Ben Rentz). This was followed by a recommendation from the deacons to have only one morning worship service during January, February and March as a trial period due to the new sanctuary's increased capacity.

Pastor Crouch announced on January 14 that Providence would participate in its third mission church. The Candlewyck project would be shared with Carmel Baptist, Sharon Baptist and Matthews Baptist. An "interest meeting" for persons seeking information about the Candlewyck Mission was at 3:00 pm on January 14, 1979.

The January 15, 1979, *Pastorgram* announced the death of Dr. Amos Bumgardner on January 13. He was a charter member and Deacon Emeritus. Dr. Bumgardner was a strong supporter of Providence from its inception and would be sorely missed.

The Music Ministry announced that Patricia Lynn McBrayer would become the new church Organist/Music Assistant effective February 1, 1979. Her duties would be working with the graded choir program, accompanying the various choirs, ensemble, and providing secretarial help for Lowell Dotson in the Music and Outreach Programs. Patty graduated from Mars Hill College with a Bachelor of Music Degree and received the Master of Church Music Degree from Southern Seminary. She came to Providence from the First Baptist Church of Kannapolis where she served as Organist/Instructor and Interim Minister of Music.

January closed with Baptist Men's Day, beginning with breakfast for all the men and boys and ending with the men conducting the vesper service with the sermon delivered by John McCulloch.

The annual Providence Bible Study Course was held February 4-7, 1979, with the Gospel of Mark taught by Dr. George Beasley-Murray, Professor of Greek at Southern Seminary. He was a Greek Scholar, author of many books and *just a wonderful Christian*, as Pastor Crouch related.

An Ordination Service was held for Robert T. Smith on February 11, 1979. Robert, the son of Leonard and Anne Smith, graduated from Southeastern Seminary in 1979 with the Master of Divinity Degree. Following his graduation, Robert and wife, Carolyn, were called to serve the Red Hill Baptist Church of Ansonville, North Carolina. His Ordination Sermon was preached by Dr. James E. Tull, one of his professors at Southeastern Seminary.

A church-wide adult fellowship was held on February 16 with guest speaker Lou Heckler, Director of Human Resources and Development at WBTV. It was a time of fun and fellowship for all.

The annual WMU Focus Week was February 18-25, 1979, with the theme, "Teach Missions, Engage in Missions and Support Missions." All the women and girls of the church were encouraged to participate in the WMU mission projects.

In March 1979, Providence focused upon the Home Mission fields during the Week of Prayer with the theme, "Dare To Ask." As Pastor Crouch stated in the March 5 *Pastorgram*: *That should make us bold enough to increase our family's offering. It should make us bold enough to spend time each day in prayer for Home Missions.*"

The Providence offering goal was \$4,000. Dr. William Tanner, Executive Director of the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board, was the guest speaker for the week.

The March 11 vesper service was a special appearance by Providence's Country Music Ambassador to Europe, George Hamilton, IV, who gave a rousing Country/Gospel Sacred Music Concert. This was followed on March 20 with a concert by the Mercer University Choir. On March 29, 1979, the Chicago Children's Choir gave a concert which included a wide variety of popular and sacred music. The choir members, ages 9-19, performed marvelously!

March 11-18, 1979, was Youth Week with the theme, "Youth Experiencing Discipleship." The youth led most of the church functions during the week. Serving as ministers were: Paula Cole, Jeff Cromer, Randy Lail, Carlton Miller and Donna Moore.

In business session on March 25, the church voted to return to two morning services effective April 8, 1979, and to make two services a church policy. In addition, they voted to become the major sponsor of the Candlewyck Mission and to be the holding church for their membership.

On March 25, the Sanctuary Choir participated in the Salisbury Symphony and Festival Chorus presenting the "Seven Last Words of Christ" by Theodore Dubois. The choir was invited to sing in the 200-voice chorus, and Lowell Dotson was the baritone soloist.

The annual revival was April 1-5, preceded by cottage prayer groups, visitation and a church-wide sausage and eggs breakfast. The guest revivalist was Dr. J. Hoffman Harris, Pastor of the Briarlake Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention and had served as Moderator of the Atlanta Baptist Association.

As part of the Maundy Thursday Easter Service, the Sanctuary Choir performed "The Seven Last Words of Christ," directed by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by an instrumental ensemble and Patty McBrayer on the organ. The soloists were: Dennis Bucher (baritone), Steve Bunker (tenor), Jeff Walker (tenor) and Donna Moore (soprano).

The April 9 *Pastorgram* announced that the Candlewyck Mission began holding Sunday morning worship services on March 18 at the

Charlotte Latin School. The average attendance was 35-40. There was no Sunday School program, but they had a Thursday night Bible Study Fellowship in the Candlewyck community.

The annual Doctrinal Study Course was April 22-23, 1979, on "What Do We Believe About Salvation?" The guest teacher was Rev. Nathan Brooks who had just retired from the North Carolina Baptist State Convention.

The April 23, 1979, *Pastorgram* announced that Steve Cromer had accepted the Summer Associate position beginning June 1. Steve was a graduate of Wofford College with a degree in Religion and at the time was a first-year student at Southeastern Seminary.

May 1979 began with a Focus on the Family Adult Seminar on *Parenting, Changing Patterns in Family Living, Senior Adult Living, and Baptist Beliefs*. Rev. Wade Tucker was the series coordinator.

On May 6, 1979, an Ordination Service was held for Stephen Wayne Smith. Steve, the son of Oscar and Mrs. Smith, graduated from Lenoir Rhyne College and would receive his Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Seminary in June 1979. While in college, Steve served Sharon Baptist Church and several other churches. Effective July 1, 1979, he would become Pastor of Arlington Baptist Church in Mint Hill. Steve's Ordination Sermon was preached by Dr. George Beasley-Murray, one of his professors.

May 13 and May 16 brought two former Providence youth back to the family. First, Hal and Roberta Melton had answered the call to ministry. He graduated from Southeastern Seminary on May 8 and was being ordained at the First Baptist Church of Lancaster, South Carolina. Pastor and Mrs. Crouch participated in the Ordination Service. Following ordination, he accepted a staff position in Greenville, North Carolina. Second, Rev. Dennis Kirkley, who was ordained at Providence, was the Wednesday night speaker on May 16. He and his wife, Janet, were serving as Associate Ministers at Crescent Heights Baptist Church in Calgary, Canada, and were in Charlotte on vacation.

May 20, 1979, was Providence's 25th Anniversary. A special Anniversary Committee chaired by Ed Haire was established to coordinate plans for the celebration, such as: high attendance in Sunday School, honoring charter members at a May 18 banquet and recognizing them during the May 20 worship service, dinner-on-the

grounds and a Memorial Service for departed members in the vesper hour, followed by the Sanctuary Choir and Pritchard Memorial Baptist Choir performing the Oratorio "Elijah."

Two added features of the May 20 celebration were: (1) the Anniversary Anthem, "He Is Our God," written by Dr. Don Husted by commission of the 25th Anniversary Committee, and (2) special anniversary bookmarks given as mementos of the celebration. Also available were the new church directories.

In called business session on May 20, the church approved the following resolution:

In appreciation of God's blessings to us in our first 25 years we recommend that we say 'thank you' to God for His goodness by setting aside the 26th year as a year of commitment with emphasis on world hunger and relief.

A special Project Committee of 16 persons was approved to plan and coordinate the approved resolution.

The May 28, 1979, **Pastorgram** announced that Sunday School services would begin on June 3 at the Candlewyck Baptist Mission with classes for all ages. Dr. W. Perry Crouch, father of the pastor, would preach the 11:00 am sermon.

Bill Crouch, the oldest son of the Crouches, preached at the morning services on June 10, 1979. A graduate of Wingate College and Wake Forest University, he received the Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Seminary and was in the process of completing his Doctor of Ministry Degree. At the time, Bill and his wife, Lynne, were serving as Pastor of the Warrenton Baptist Church. He and his grandfather, W. Perry Crouch, had officiated at sister Sarah's wedding on Saturday, June 9, at Providence.

On June 11, 1979, Providence members Talmadge Bailey and Bob Gillespie departed for a two-week trip to Guadeloupe to assist with the construction of a missionary residence. At the June 10 morning worship service, they were recognized and a prayer for their journey was offered. This was the first of many such mission trips undertaken by Providence members through the years.

The June 18 **Pastorgram** announced that WBTB would tape the June 24, 1979, 11:00 am worship service and then telecast it at 11:00 am the following Sunday. This was a good opportunity for Providence shut-ins to be a part of the worship service.

In business session on June 24, the church approved an amendment to increase the number of deacons to 48 and to create an administrative deacon classification to assist in coordinating all church organizational activities. In addition, the congregation elected to honor a request from the pastor that he be allowed to move from church-owned housing and, in lieu thereof, be paid a reasonable housing allowance.

The June 25, 1979, *Pastorgram* announced that Pastor Crouch had been selected to be the vice-chair of the Personnel Committee for 1980 by the President of the Foreign Mission Board. The Personnel Committee screened all candidates for missionary service.

Friday, June 29, was "Roast Lowell Evening" with excellent food and great entertainment to celebrate Lowell's 10 years of dedicated service as Minister of Music and Outreach. As Pastor Crouch stated: *As Pastor, I salute Lowell Dotson on this 10th Anniversary! He has been a partner, a coworker and a good personal friend.....He has made a valuable contribution to the life of our church and we wish God's richest blessings to fall upon the Dotson family in the years ahead.* The Master of Ceremonies was Don Motsinger, and there was special entertainment from the men's quartet. It was a great evening of fun and fellowship.

On Sunday, July 1, 1979, Providence had two guest speakers. During the morning services, Dr. Ralph Scales, President of Wake Forest University, spoke. The vesper hour speaker was Rev. Dean Kaufman, Minister of Education at the Greenwich, Connecticut, Baptist Church, who was here to meet with the Providence Mission Group to Connecticut. Dean had been Providence's Minister of Education from 1965-1972. They were followed on July 8 by Rev. Wade Tucker and Rev. Ruth Thompson, Providence members.

On Friday, July 13, 1979, the Youth Ensemble presented a concert of secular-sacred music at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly for the religious educators in the Southern Baptist Convention Eastern Region. This was followed on Sunday evening, July 15, by Dr. Leon Riddick and the Sanctuary Choir of Mt Carmel Baptist in concert at Providence.

While Pastor Crouch was vacationing in early August, Dr. Grady Wilson, church member and Billy Graham Team Member, preached

the morning services on August 5. Rev. Wade Tucker delivered the vesper hour sermon.

Following the vesper hour on August 19, 1979, there was a Gay Nineties Night with members dressed in the gay ninety style to accompany the music of the era. The evening was capped off with an ice cream fellowship.

Three ministers celebrated anniversaries during August 1979. Steve Hoffman and Ed Landrus were completing three years as Ministers to Children and Youth, and Wade Tucker was completing his first year as Minister to Adults. All three had made a mark on church programs, and their families had made meaningful contributions to the Providence fellowship. As Pastor Crouch stated: *Add together their years, along with the pastor's and Lowell's, and we enter the new church year with a 'pro' staff.*

A new organizational change was initiated in September 1979. Six of the 40 deacons would serve, for the first time, as administrative coordinators for the deacon body. They would undergird the church committees, the flow of business, and coordinate church policies and report to the deacon body each month. The chair for 1979-1980 was Tom Pfaff. The other five were: Bill Williams, Earl Pope, Sam Rutland, Joe Craig and Wayne Dunn. The Deacon Chair, the Senior Minister and the Business Administrator would serve as ex-officio to the group.

September 1979 began a "United for Ministry – North Carolina Missions Offering" sponsored by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. This was five offerings in one to undergird Baptist agencies: hospital, homes for the aging, children's home, Heck-Jones and Christian education. The state goal was \$2,000,000 with the Providence goal set at \$3,000 for 1980.

The 26th-year Anniversary Project for Hunger and Relief, as agreed upon in September 1979, was a church cookbook. Members felt that the cookbook would help the members of a growing church get to know each other better by sharing recipes, prayers and devotional thoughts.....and just for fun, it would include a once-a-year splurge with a section on homecoming favorites. Mary Ann Crouch was the Project Coordinator.

In September 1979, Providence petitioned the Home Mission Board to permit the church to sponsor an Agricultural Missionary to

a foreign country. The cost was \$20,000 and required a variety of fund-raising projects, including a mock funeral.

On Sunday, September 30, 1979, the 1980 church budget was presented to the congregation for discussion and study. The vote would be taken on Sunday, October 7.

One of the October-November 1979 highlights was a special adult seminar entitled "Coping With Life Crises" led by Minister with Adults Wade Tucker. It focused upon major life crises: separation, divorce, death, childbirth, marriage, job loss, job transfers, etc. Deacons, Sunday School teachers, and other concerned persons were strongly encouraged to participate in the opportunity for pastoral care training.

On Sunday, September 30, 1979, Pastor Crouch completed his eleventh year as pastor. As he began his twelfth year in October, he stated: *My sermon theme will be the same 'Adventures in Faith' for the challenge is still before us.*

The October 22, 1979, ***Pastorgram*** reported that Pastor Crouch and Providence were to be included in a new book entitled ***Bold Missions*** sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention. Pastor Crouch was one of 17 ministers selected to write a chapter on mission churches that their congregations had sponsored. The pastor entitled his chapter "Adventures in Faith." The ***Pastorgram*** also reported that Patty McBrayer, new Associate in Music and Organ, had been chosen to play the organ for all sessions of the 1980 State Baptist Convention to be held in Winston-Salem.

November 1979 began with efforts to complete pledges for the 1980 budget of \$689,000. The first major activity of the month was the church Growth Conference which was: designed to provide an opportunity for a thorough analysis of growth at Providence and in the community; raise the level of awareness of the thousands of unchurched persons living around the church; present and interpret basic church growth information; reaffirm the Biblical concept of the ministry of the laity; help prioritize church ministry goals; challenge members to engage in training, prayer and personal inreach/outreach; and provide a specific time of the church individually and collectively to examine our commitment to the call of Jesus Christ to be His disciples – pointing men to God.

The November 19, 1979, *Pastorgram* announced that Rev. Jim Graham, who had recently joined Providence, was serving as Interim Pastor of McKee Road Baptist Church in Matthews. Jim and Eunice would celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Sunday, November 25.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions began on November 25, 1979, with guest speaker Dr. J. Bryan Brazington, Area Secretary, Western South American Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (Rev. Bill Andrews' supervisor). The Lottie Moon Offering was December 16 with Providence's goal being \$26,000.

The November 19, 1979, *Pastorgram* reported that the church had approved the purchase of a Dover Elevator for the sanctuary. The total cost of the building renovation by the R. H. Wheatley Company and the elevator was \$34,000. Approximately half of the funds for the project came from the Will of Dr. Amos Bumgardner.

Pastor Crouch stated on November 26 that the Charlotte City Council had voted to enter into a contract with Providence to provide a full-time chaplain to the Police Department. Providence would hire a minister with clinical training and assign him to the police as chaplain. Dennis Whitaker, with a Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Seminary, was approved as an associate staff member and assigned to the police as chaplain. Pastor Crouch had served as a volunteer chaplain with the police for 11 years.

December 1979 began with an Advent Organ Recital by Patty McBrayer. This concert was the beginning of the Advent Season and was followed by the Sanctuary Choir concert "Celebration Through Music." Also participating were the Adult Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, Youth Ensemble, Ladies Bell Ensemble and Youth Bell Ensemble. The production was directed by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by Patty McBrayer.

The annual Candlelight Service was on Sunday, December 23. Highlights of the service were special music by the Adult Ensemble entitled "A Christmas Cantata," solos by Noelle Player and Melanie Myers and congregational hymn singing. The service concluded with the lighting of the candles and the recessional led by Pastor Crouch.

The December 24, 1979, *Pastorgram* announced a job change for Wade Tucker. Beginning January 1, 1980, his title would be Minister with Adults/Church Growth, and he would be directing Providence's emphasis on church growth in 1980.

The 1979 year concluded with the December 30 College Day at Christmas. College students led the music, prayers and gave the sermon. The three speakers were: David Cromer, Al Ledford and Cindy Pope. The 11:00 pm Watch Night Service ended with the chiming of 1980.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1979, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. George Beasley-Murray, Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Southern Seminary

Dr. Bryan Brazington, Home Mission Board Area Secretary for Western South America

Rev. Nathan Brooks, Director of Church Programs, North Carolina Baptist State Convention

Rev. Bill Crouch, Pastor, Warrenton Baptist Church

Mr. Steve Cromer, Summer Associate

Dr. Harley Dickson, Pastor, Providence United Methodist

Rev. James F. Graham, Retired Pastor and Church Member

Dr. J. Hoffman Harris, Pastor, Briarlake Baptist Church, Decatur, Georgia

Mr. M. A. Henderson, Executive Vice President, Gideons International

Rev. Dennis Kirkley, Student, Southeastern Seminary

Rev. Andy Loving, Co-Editor of *Seeds Magazine*, Southern Baptist Convention

Dr. Leon Riddick, Pastor, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

Dr. Ralph Scales, President, Wake Forest University

Dr. William G. Tanner, Executive Director, Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board

Rev. Wade Tucker, Minister with Adults

Dr. James E. Tull, Professor, Southeastern Seminary

Rev. Bob Wall, Executive Dir., George Shinn Foundation

Mr. Dennis Whitaker, Student, Southeastern Seminary



Chapter 4

The 1980s

By 1980, President Jimmy Carter's performance did not satisfy Americans who wanted superiority in foreign affairs—a reinstatement of the considerable military edge the United States possessed in the early days of the Cold War. The nostalgia for old-fashioned American militancy found a ringing voice in President Ronald Reagan, elected in 1980 after a campaign in which he charged that the United States was falling behind the Soviets in the arms race and retreating under fire from the Third World. Reagan promised to abandon détente and SALT-II, dramatically increase the military budget, and support right-wing governments that stood by American foreign policy. About the Vietnam War, Reagan said, *It is time we recognized that ours was, in truth, a noble cause*. The United States, it appeared, had come full circle – back in 1961 when John F. Kennedy had decided to win the Vietnam War.

By 1980, the nation's economy was in shambles. Inflation had jumped to 13.4%, and buyers around the world had lost confidence in the dollar, causing unprecedented increases in the price of gold. Worse still, by 1980 the nation was in full-fledged recession, with an unemployment rate of 7.5%. Throughout the 1980s, some of the major concerns were: the number of young black families headed by single women, the rising black middle class, white backlash, Indian militancy, a new influx of immigrants, especially Hispanics, the anti-feminist movement (Superwoman Squeeze), the resurgence of conservatism, with a partnership between politicians and Evangelical Christians and Reaganomics.

Reaganomics, Reagan's economic program, included massive cuts in income taxes, accompanied by large social welfare cuts, which

avored the affluent and penalized the poor. During the 1980s, Reaganomics became synonymous with human suffering. From a social perspective, the Reagan policies were in opposition to women, nonwhites and organized labor, even though there was an historic first in 1984, when the Democratic Party nominated Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro to be its vice-presidential candidate.

Although personally popular, Reagan, by the end of his second term in office, presided over a polarized people. In the second half of the 1980s, the gap was growing between affluent whites and poor nonwhites, between Frostbelt and Sunbelt states, between the country's social and defense needs, and between liberal lifestyles and religious conservatism. Uncertainties in the economy threatened its continuing rebound. While many businesspeople made money in the 1980s, farmers were burdened by debts they could not repay. Around them, banks collapsed and small towns died. The budget deficit during Reagan's second term added more than \$700 billion to the national debt. At stake too were Reagan's commitment and ability to achieve arms control and peace in the middle East, Africa and Central America.

In 1980, Charlotte's population was 315,000, with Mecklenburg County's surpassing 406,000. The area's rapid population increase in the 1980s moved Mecklenburg from being a suburban to a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) by 1990 with a 50-mile population projection of 1.2 million. This classed the area as being a center of banking, manufacturing, trade and cultural attractions.

Much of Charlotte's rapid, positive growth and expansion during the 1980s was due to a good working relationship between business, local government and higher education institutions. A key area of focus was toward revitalization of the center city. Some of the new features were a Transit Mall, an Uptown Park and renovation of the Independence Plaza Buildings and the Coddington Building.

During the 1980s, Charlotte also became known for its Arts and Science Council Fund made up of 50 community groups. The object of the Arts Council was to restore and project Charlotte as a cultural center. They were eventually successful in aiding the City Symphony Orchestra and Opera Company, an expanded Mint Museum of Art, Spirit Square, and the beginning of Discovery Place, the science and technology museum.

A big boon to the Charlotte area's development in the 1980s was the growth and expansion of the Charlotte/Douglas International Airport into one of the most modern terminal facilities in the nation. A key part of the airport's success came through the "hub" system started by Piedmont Airlines and expanded by Eastern and US Airways.

In 1985, Charlotte became a major sports city when the National Basketball Association granted George Shinn a franchise. The Charlotte Hornets began in 1986-87 with a losing season. They were supplemented by the Charlotte Motor Speedway, the UNCC Forty Niners, the minor league baseball team and the Kemper Open Golf Tournament at Quail Hollow.

From a religious perspective in the 1980s, Charlotte was witnessing the beginning of a large movement of city churches to the growing suburbs, such as Calvary Church, Carmel Baptist and Forest Hills Presbyterian. Another religious trend was the beginning and growth of seminaries, such as the Reformed Seminary that now occupies the old Carmel Baptist site. However, the most dramatic religious feature of the 1980s was televangelism promoted by PTL's Jim Bakker and others.

On January 4, 1980, Pastor Crouch stated:

A new decade has begun and we welcome the 80s with much enthusiasm. God has blessed our ministry as a church in Charlotte in the past ten years and we start 1980 with many exciting challenges. Charlotte joins a select group of American cities with a full-time Police Chaplain. Providence has played an important role in making this a reality. Church growth is the theme of the 80s and we want to be bold in our mission outreach. Wade Tucker will be helping us with this emphasis on outreach.

During January 1980, two former Summer Associates were in the news. Keithen Tucker (1978) had become Pastor at the Mt. Gilead Baptist Church in Pittsboro. He was a third-year student at Southeastern Seminary and his wife, Sarah Crouch Tucker, was a junior at Meredith College. Marvin Cameron (1976 and 1977) had completed his Master of Theology Degree and was looking for a church in Tennessee.

The January 14, 1980, *Pastorgram* announced that Providence had been assigned a refugee family from Saigon, Vietnam. The Phong family consisted of seven members and would arrive with only the clothing on their backs. Providence was the first Baptist church in Charlotte to sponsor a family.

The two major activities in January were the WMU Workshop and Luncheon and the Baptist Men's Day. The WMU Workshop emphasized making needed items for community groups and collecting toilet articles for needy persons. The Baptist Men focused upon Baptist stewardship in North Carolina, ministry to the elderly and the ministry of wills and the Baptist Foundation. The morning sermon was by George Shinn, Chair of the Board of George Shinn and Associates, a national consulting firm to business colleges.

The January 21, 1980, *Pastorgram* announced that several members were serving as trustees of North Carolina Baptist organizations: Tom Pfaff, Wingate College; Ben Knott, Mars Hill College; Bart Hodges and Arthur Smith, Gardner-Webb College; and Lee Royal, Campbell University. In addition, Ed Haire was a trustee of the North Carolina Baptist Homes for the Aged. Finally, Floyd Gibson was the chairman of the Baptist Foundation.

February 3, 1980, was Scout Week, and all of the scouts sat together during the 11:00 am worship service. By 1980, Providence had four Scout Troops: Troop 166 for boys, two Brownie Troops and one Junior Girl Scout Troop. Gene Tinker was the committee chair.

The annual Bible Study Course was February 17-20, 1980, with Dr. Peter R. Jones, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia, as the guest teacher. Prior to becoming a pastor, Dr. Jones was a Professor at Southern Seminary with an excellent reputation as a teacher.

March 1980 began with the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, with guest speaker Dr. Huey Perry of the Home Mission Board. The theme leading up to the Annie Armstrong Offering was "We Cannot Keep From Telling." The Providence offering goal was \$5,000.

The March 3, 1980, *Pastorgram* announced that Eva Compton, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Dudley Compton, was one of the 1980's 65 high school seniors to receive the coveted Morehead Scholarship to the University of North Carolina. The award was patterned after the

Rhodes Scholarship Program at Oxford University and is based on academic achievement, leadership and community service. In 1979, Providence's Carlton Miller won the Morehead Scholarship and was completing his first year at UNC-CH.

March 9-16, 1980, was Youth Week with the youth teaching adult Sunday School classes and leading both morning worship services. The four youth ministers were: Paul McElroy, Bonnie Poplin, Shane Simpson and Leigh Stipp. The week concluded with a Youth Banquet.

On March 17, the Music Ministry sponsored a musical concert by the "Bisonett's" from Oklahoma Baptist University. This group of young women was on a national tour and presented an excellent concert of choral music.

The March 24, 1980, *Pastorgram* announced that Providence had added its first Food Service Director to the church staff. Debra Barton, a graduate of Meredith College with a degree in Home Economics, began her work on March 17. Food Service Director is a full-time position involving the supervision and preparation of meals which are needed as the church implements the various programs of service.

In business session on March 30, 1980, the church voted to set apart three men as Deacons Emeritus: Harry Bacon, Andy Borders and Herman Kissiah. This brought to five the deacons so honored in Providence's 16 years of history. The first two were the late Dr. Amos Bumgardner and Russ Tucker. Requirements for this designation call for a deacon to have served at least 10 years on the active group and be 70 years old. A deacon must be nominated by the deacons and voted on by the church.

A Deacon Emeritus receives all information sent to the deacon board, is invited to all meetings and can speak to any issue but does not have a vote. He is not expected to serve as a family minister to a group; however, his presence adds spiritual power to the deacons month-by-month.

Providence's refugee family arrived in Charlotte during the first week of April 1980 and was greeted by a jubilant delegation complete with five Vietnamese interpreters. All seven Phongs were in good spirits and had no personal belongings but were greatly in need of

love and friendship. Iris Burnett coordinated the events leading up to the arrival.

It was announced on April 7, 1980, that two Providence members had received Honorary Doctorates: George Shinn from Limestone College and Arthur Smith from Steeds College in Johnson City, Tennessee.

On April 13, the Music Ministry presented a concert entitled "Sacred Stylings for Two Pianos" by Patty McBrayer and John Palmer Smith. Mr. Smith was on the staff of Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church. The concert consisted of original arrangements of familiar hymns and gospel songs for two pianos. It was a superb evening.

The spring revival was April 20-23, 1980, with guest revivalist Dr. Alton McEachern, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Greensboro. The revival was preceded by a series of cottage prayer meetings and community visitation. It was a very positive renewal for the church.

The April 14, 1980, *Pastorgram* carried news about Providence's seminary students. Gary Kaufman and Dennis Whitaker were graduating from Southeastern with Master of Divinity Degrees. Jane Shannon Hull was graduating from Southern Seminary with a Master of Church Music Degree. Bill Crouch was receiving his Doctor of Ministry Degree from Southeastern Seminary. In addition, Mark and Susan Andrews were applying for career missionary status with the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. There was also news from Calgary, Canada, that Dennis and Janet Kirkley were anticipating appointment in 1981 as missionaries by the Canadian Baptist Overseas Mission Board.

In a called business meeting on April 27, 1980, the church approved a motion to request the Mecklenburg Baptist Association Ordination Committee to question Gary Kaufman for Ordination to the Ministry. In addition, they agreed to allow one and one-half hours for worship on May 18 for Anniversary Sunday and also approved a Home Mission Project to Alaska for David Arant, Wayne Secrist, Joe and Margaret Craig. That evening, the Sanctuary Choir and soloists presented "Acts," a musical drama by Buryl Red which made the book of Acts come alive through music.

The May 5, 1980, *Pastorgram* announced a new mission project to the Dominican Republic for 15 days in July to build a mission church in the mountain area near Santiago. Participants paid their own way, \$700 per person, and shared a wonderful experience of growth with missionaries in the field. The project was headed by members Lee and Bob Josey. The same *Pastorgram* stated that Mike McKee, son of Dr. and Mrs. Gil McKee, would be recommended by the church to enroll in Southeastern Seminary in the summer of 1980. Mike was a graduate of Wingate College. In addition, Sam Rutland, III, had accepted the position of Associate Pastor at Sharon Baptist Church, beginning in June.

Steve Hoffman, Minister with Youth, announced that Keith Sexton had accepted the call to serve as the Summer Associate for 15 weeks. Keith was a graduate of Carson Newman College and had just completed his first semester at Southeastern Seminary. He came with experience as a summer missionary with emphasis on Backyard Bible clubs, drama and puppets.

Sunday, May 18, 1980, was a Day of Celebration, the 26th Anniversary of Providence. A rainstorm washed the campus and moved the meal to the fellowship hall. However, the food was as delicious as ever and capped off with "Pepsis," which signified the presence of Tucker Johnson. The 26th Anniversary Project Committee did a superb job in reporting the events of the year. The highlight of the day was the presence and participation of Dr. Keith Parks, President of the Foreign Mission Board. In addition, Jim and Carolyn Robinson joined as new members. David Coward made his decision for full-time ministry service. Thirty-five Candlewyck members were present, along with the Phong refugee family. The day closed with a lovely worship service for the Providence members who had passed away. The choir and guest musicians made the Memorial Service special.

The May 19 *Pastorgram* announced that Otto Lockee had received his Doctor of Education Degree from Nova University in Florida. Otto was a Providence deacon and a Vice President at Central Piedmont Community College. The same *Pastorgram* stated that the memorial elevator had arrived and was being installed with a usage date of early June. Gifts, primarily from the Dr. Amos Bumgardner estate, made the elevator possible.

On May 21, 1980, an Ordination Service was held for Gary Kaufman with his father, Dean Kaufman (former Minister of Education), preaching the Ordination Sermon. Gary had graduated from Southeastern Seminary in May and would begin pastoral duties at Fork Baptist Church in Virginia.

For the vesper service on June 1, 1980, an Organ Recital was sponsored by the Randy Moore Music Endowment Fund. Dr. Max Smith, recital organist and Music Department Chair at Appalachian State University, was the guest organist. Dr. Smith was well-known among North Carolina Baptists, having served several churches and taught at Southeastern Seminary. He played a variety of organ recital pieces, both sacred and popular.

At the June 8 vesper hour, the Young Singers (grades 1-6) presented "Down By The Creek Bank," a musical experience into the world of children, in their setting, sung by children for children. The musical's key words were "support the youth." Debra Wallace and Patty McBrayer were the leaders and earned praise and appreciation for leading the youth. At the June 15 vesper hour, "Lightshine" was presented by the Youth Choir. "Lightshine" was a music/drama with dialogue around the Beatitudes to remind us of God's words to let our light so shine that others may see Christ in us.

On June 30, 1980, Lowell Dotson announced that the Music Ministry would expand in the fall with the formation of a new musical ensemble, the Adult Chorale, composed of married persons to perform special programs of varied seasonal and general music. Lowell Dotson would be the chorale's director.

The summer Youth Mission Trip, July 6-12, 1980, to the Stewart Baptist Center in Atlanta was an excellent combination of hard work, enthusiasm, recreation and accomplished objectives. The youth worked with four summer missionaries, the Center Director and the neighborhood children. Their main task was to paint the second story level, windows and awnings at the Stewart Center. Sixteen youth and four adults participated.

The July 14 *Pastorgram* carried information from Bill and Connie Andrews, missionaries to Chile, that three church buildings were under construction in South Chile and that Providence gift

money had helped greatly. Bill and Connie were hoping to get a personal leave to check on their children in the United States.

Pastor Crouch announced on July 21, 1980, that the federal courts had ruled against Providence's participation in the Police Chaplaincy Program with the Charlotte Police Department. The church's participation was deemed to violate the principle of separation of church and state in the federal constitution. Rev. Dennis Whitaker and the Police Chief would need to seek other avenues to continue the needed service.

Providence observed World Hunger Week August 3-10, 1980, as a part of the Southern Baptist Convention focus on hunger. This program began in 1975 and was the first time that Southern Baptists had emphasized the hunger needs of the world. The 1980 offering was divided 50% for foreign relief and hunger, 20% for home mission relief and hunger, and 30% was disbursed locally. The guest speaker was Dr. William L. Reames, a Providence member and Area Representative for the Presbyterian Ministers' Fund.

August 24, 1980, was Summer Associate Keith Sexton's last day. During the vesper hour, he delivered a message entitled "Can You Dare Let Your God Die." A reception followed the service. At the reception, Minister with Youth Steve Hoffman said: *My best salute to Keith as one who brought enthusiasm, hard work and fun to his job.* In September, Keith would be returning to his classes at Southeastern Seminary.

The August 25, 1980, **Pastorgram** carried a "congratulations" to member George W. Bullard, Jr. on his graduation from Southern Seminary with a Doctor of Ministry Degree. George was Director of Missions/Ministries for the Mecklenburg Baptist Association. While Pastor Crouch was vacationing on August 17, George preached the morning sermons.

September 1, 1980, brought three staff anniversary celebrations. Steve Hoffman and Ed Landrus were beginning their fifth years, and Wade Tucker would be starting his third year. As Pastor Crouch stated: *September 1 will be a special day for all three families and we acknowledge with satisfaction this milestone.*

In the September 1 **Pastorgram**, Minister of Music Lowell Dotson announced a new "first" for Providence. Jerry Anderson, a church music student at Mars Hill College, would begin a 15-week

student teacher assignment and would assume music responsibilities as delegated by the church music staff. In effect, Jerry was a music intern with supervision and training opportunities provided by the Music Ministry.

In the September 15, 1980 *Pastorgram*, the pastor announced that *Mark and Susan Andrews would be appointed as missionaries to Chile by the Foreign Mission Board on October 14*. Pastor Crouch was allowed to make the motion for this historic event as his last duty as vice-chairman of the committee. It was hoped that Bill and Connie Andrews could attend the Appointment Service.

From its inception, Providence was missions oriented, which tied into the Bold Missions Thrust of the late 1970s and 1980s. As Pastor Crouch stated: *We seek to be deeply involved with the sharing of Christ to the world. As Baptists, we are interested in all kinds of missions: associational, home and foreign.*

In September 1980, Pastor Crouch completed his first term as a trustee to the Foreign Mission Board. As he stated:

It has proven to be one of the greatest experiences of my life. For these years I have served on the Personnel Committee and participated in approving over 300 new missionaries each year. Mark and Susan Andrews became the last couple in my active role on the committee.

My new assignment as Chair of the South, Southeast Asia Committee places me on the Overseas Council and a member of the Administrative Committee of the Board. It is a place of high trust and responsibility and I need your prayers as I seek to fulfill my new role.

It means that sometime in 1981, I will be asked to travel to that part of the world to have first-hand contact with our missionaries. The countries involved will be the Philippines, Guam, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Bangladesh, India and Laos.

The following are examples of the Providence Mission Thrust in 1980-81: (1) In September 1980, the State Missions and Baptist Institutions (such as the Baptist Hospital, homes for the aging and the Children's Home) Offering goal was \$3,000. (2) For the November-December emphasis on Lottie Moon and Foreign

Missions, the goal was \$22,500. (3) In March 1981, the Home Missions goal was \$5,000.

As Pastor Crouch summed it up in the September 15, 1980, **Pastorgram**:

Our Cooperative Program is the major lifeline for all our work as Baptists. In 1980, we will give 13-1/2% of our budget receipts to all our Baptist programs. Providence is one of the top ten givers in North Carolina churches. The Mission Committee is recommending 14% in 1981 – inflation and the open door demand it – our faith may have to get sacrificial but let's plan to be optimistic.

The WMU was the missions leader at Providence. In the September 22, 1980 **Pastorgram**, Alma Hunt wrote:

Writing the history has reaffirmed my conviction that Women's Missionary Union is a living force – motivating people to action, permeating our churches with missionary zeal, aiding the convention in its missionary efforts. The legacies of the past steady present leadership in face of the opportunities the future offers.

In October 1980, the WMU studied the history of the Women's Missionary Union, did a State Mission Study and had a Baptist Women Ingathering Fellowship with the theme, "Who In the World Am I?" Come find out how one woman can make a difference.

In late September 1980, Providence joined the Mecklenburg Baptist Association and the North Carolina Baptist Convention in sponsoring a Charlotte Korean Baptist Mission. The mission held its first meetings in the old parsonage on Randolph Road with Rev. Sei Hun Kim, a seminary student from Korea, as pastor. The church was active in securing furniture and other items for the Kim family.

The September 29, 1980 **Pastorgram** announced several staff changes. As Pastor Crouch related it:

Let us pay tribute to R. C. Bryson, our first Church Administrator, who resigned at the end of September. He has accomplished a tremendous task for us and opened the door for order. Ed Landrus will be our Interim Administrator and will supervise operations along with the children's work.

Mrs. Darlene Martin has resigned as Receptionist to become a mother. Taking her place, with the title of Educational Secretary, is Karen Johnstone. We welcome her to our office staff.

Wade Tucker has been assigned a new role as Minister of Education-Church Programs. In this role he will be supervising all the educational programs of the church: youth, children, adult and music.

Another unexpected announcement was that the R. H. Wheatley Company had returned \$2,700 following the installation of the elevator. Their estimated cost was \$10,000, but the actual cost was \$7,300. It was very gracious of the company to do this.

During the first week of October 1980, Providence endorsed the request of David Cromer to enroll in Southeastern Seminary in the fall of 1981. At the time, David was a senior at Western Carolina University. He would join Mike McKee and Rev. Sei Hun Kim from Providence.

On Sunday, October 5, Henry Crouch began his thirteenth year as pastor. As he related in the **Pastorgram**: *They have been busy and fulfilling years. God has richly blessed us and we stand on the threshold of being a real 'servant-church' for our Lord in Charlotte.*

On October 12, 1980, the Providence congregation endorsed Bob Josey and his son, Lee, to be short-term (two weeks) mission helpers in Honduras. Also endorsed were Dr. and Mrs. Joe Craig as volunteers to Bangalore, India, for five weeks in November to operate a dental clinic.

On October 18, 1980, the Music Ministry presented a special concert featuring Cynthia Clawson. Cynthia was a superb singer, and area churches were invited to share in this concert of popular and sacred hymns. On October 26, the Sanctuary Choir repeated the inspiring music/drama, "Acts," which portrayed the events, characters and beautiful story contained in the book of Acts. It truly inspired and challenged those who attended the performance.

The October 27, 1980, **Pastorgram** announced the resignation of Food Service Director Debra Barton to pursue a new position. She stated: *It has been my pleasure to work with and get to know the staff here. I am indeed grateful for the opportunity to have had*

a small part in the fellowship ministry in one of the state's great Baptist churches.

November 1980 began the two-month Foreign Missions Emphasis which culminated in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The offering goal was \$22,000, and the guest speaker was Dr. John Mills, the Foreign Mission Area Secretary for Western Africa. Another highlight of the Mission Emphasis was the study of "WMU at Work in the Church." The teacher was Mary Dodd, Associational WMU Director.

The 1981 church budget was presented to the congregation on November 2 for discussion and approval. As Pastor Crouch introduced the budget: *It's official now. We will need \$770,000 in 1981 to keep our doors open, moving ahead and reaching out.*

Sunday, November 16, began with the Baptist Men's Fellowship Breakfast. The meeting topic was "The Changing Family" with Elizabeth and Wade Tucker as the speakers. This was preceded on November 14 by the Better Homes Fellowship which focused upon "Celebrating Marriage" with Dr. and Mrs. Doug Aldrich from the First Baptist Church of Gastonia as the speakers.

During November and December 1980, Providence participated in six Mission Action Projects: Loaves and Fishes, Crisis Assistance Ministries, Friendship Trays, Florence Crittenden Services, Ladies Rehabilitation Center and Fruitland Clothing Drive.

December 1980 began with an Advent Organ Recital featuring Music Associate/Organist Patty McBrayer, assisted by tenor Gary Grant. The recital featured popular and sacred music of the season.

The December 8, 1980, ***Pastorgram*** carried the announcement that Steve Hoffman, Minister with Youth, had tendered his resignation, effective March 1981 in order to redirect his calling and style of ministry. As Pastor Crouch stated: *The Hoffmans have played a big role in our church life for the past four years.....We are grateful for their loyal support and the energy expended to make our ministry effective.*

During December, the Music Ministry presented two concerts. "Lottie D," a beautiful and inspiring music/drama, told the story of Lottie Moon's life and ministry. It featured the Youth Ensemble, Youth Bell Choir, Melanie Myers, Renee Littleton, Jerry Anderson and Patty McBrayer. On December 21 the Sanctuary Choir,

orchestra and soloists presented Part I (the Christmas section) of Handel's "Messiah," followed by the annual Candlelight Service and church fellowship.

The December 28, 1980, vesper hour was led by the Korean Mission, and Rev. Kim baptized the new Korean converts. The service gave Providence a truly international flavor in reaching out to the Charlotte community. The Korean Mission Project was a cooperative effort of the State Baptist Convention, the Mecklenburg Baptist Association, and Providence serving as the host fellowship.

The December 1980 *Pastorgram* carried a "Farewell" from Jerry Anderson, the Music Ministry Intern from Mars Hill College: *My internship as a part of your Music Ministry has been a time of learning, a time of growing, and a time of making new friends. To the ministry team, staff, and congregation of Providence, you are all very special people, people I have come to know and love. Thank you for everything!*

1979-1980 CHURCH-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

2,232	Church Membership (49 Candlewyck members)
1,539	Sunday School Enrollment
670	Sunday School Average Attendance
183	Vacation Bible School Enrollment
190	Church Training Enrollment
85	Church Training Average Attendance
330	Music Ministry Enrollment
240	WMU Enrollment
104	Brotherhood Enrollment
\$752,133	Total Contributions (budget and designated)

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1980, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Dr. George Bullard, Director, Missions Ministries, Mecklenburg Baptist Association

Dr. John W. Carlton, Professor, Southeastern Seminary

Dr. Peter R. Jones, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Decatur, GA

Rev. Dean Kaufman, Former Minister of Education

Dr. Alton McEachern, Pastor, First Baptist, Greensboro, NC

Dr. John E. Mills, Director, West Africa for Foreign Missions Board

Dr. Keith Parks, President, Foreign Mission Board

Dr. Huey Perry, Assistant Director for Institutional Chaplaincy, SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Georgia

Dr. Charles Petty, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Citizen Affairs, NC

Dr. William Reames, Area Representative for Presbyterian Ministers' Fund

Mr. George Shinn, George Shinn Foundation and Church Member

Rev. Wade Tucker, Minister with Adults

January 1981 began with Pastor Crouch on a tour of Southeast Asia as a part of his job as chair of the committee that supervised Baptist missionaries and their work. As he stated in the *Pastorgram*:

This trip is to be a learning experience and hopefully to help my sensitivity to the real needs of a hungry world. This geographical area has been hard hit by war, famine, inflation and political intrigue.

We have 300 missionary personnel in this part of the field and we will be trying to see as many as possible in a short period of time.

A highlight of the trip was a visit with Sister Teresa in Calcutta.

During January 1981, Sunday evenings were filled with a series of adult seminars entitled "Adults Aware and Growing." Two of them were: *The Judicial System* led by David Sentelle and *Life and Letters of Paul* taught by Wade Tucker. In addition, the Baptist Women offered eight Bible Study Groups and Round Tables. The Baptist Men's Day on January 25 began with a breakfast.

Pastor Crouch returned from his Southeast Asia trip on January 23, 1981, and had to succumb to a physical body that had been pushed to the limit for 30 days, plus an added flu from Asia, and three days without sleep. However, on January 25, he was back in the pulpit for the morning services. The vesper hour program was a report by Dr. Joe Craig on his dental clinic volunteer work in India.

February 1981 began with the annual Mission Workshop led by the WMU. The women made homemade soup for Loaves and Fishes, lap robes for the elderly and children's pants for Crisis Assistance Ministry. Next, the Winter Bible Study Course guest teacher was Dr. Bryant Hicks, Professor of New Testament at Southern Seminary, who taught the book of Philippians.

The February 2, 1981, *Pastorgram* wished a happy second anniversary to Music Associate Patty McBrayer. As Lowell Dotson stated: *We congratulate her for the valuable contribution she is making to the Music Ministry and to our church life.*

WMU Focus Week was held February 8-14, 1981, with the theme, "Setting Sights on Missions Involvement." To evangelize the world by the end of the century was one of the goals in Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust. If this was to be, WMU had to redouble its efforts in involving all church members in mission action and direct evangelism, as well as mission study, missions praying, missions giving and missions going. Focus Week was followed by the WMU Home Mission Study entitled "Mission Possible," led by Dr. Lawrence Childs, Executive Director of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

Providence sponsored a Community Awareness Seminar during the vesper hour on February 8, with guest speaker Mack M. Vines, the new Charlotte Police Chief.

The February 9, 1981, *Pastorgram* announced that Wade Tucker, Minister of Education/Church Programs, had resigned after two and one-half years on the staff. He had accepted the pastorate of the Southside Baptist Church of Fort Smith, Arkansas, and would be moving in early March. In addition, Minister with Youth Steve Hoffman and his family would be leaving, effective March 30.

March 1981 began with the Week of Prayer for Home Missions which concluded with the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The Southern Baptist Convention goal was \$17,250,000 and the Providence goal was \$5,500. Pastor Crouch was the featured speaker for the week.

On March 2, 1981, a Sunday School Leadership Appreciation Banquet and Farewell were held for Steve Hoffman and Wade Tucker. It was a special time of enjoying food, fellowship, recognition and a time of expressing appreciation to the Hoffman and Tucker families for their ministry at Providence. It was one of those evenings filled with ecstasy and sadness.

In early March 1981, the Youth and Adult Ladies Bell Choirs participated in the State Handbell Festivals sponsored by the State Baptist Church Music Department. Both choirs received excellent and superior ratings. The Ladies Bell Choir was given the highest

rating of any choir in the festival. Special thanks were given to Patty McBrayer and Maxine Dunn for their excellent leadership.

The March 9, 1981, *Pastorgram* announced that the Mecklenburg Mission Partners, organized to help start new Baptist churches, was seeking funds to assist the Candlewyck Mission build its first building. At the time Candlewyck had 60 members, with a building design close to \$250,000. As Pastor Crouch stated: *This is another way to help 'Win America to Christ.' This is an extension of our church in the community. Thirty-seven years ago it was Providence seeking to build its first unit.*

A Staff Consultant from the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board visited Providence during early March 1981 and made several suggestions regarding staff positions. The first suggestion was for the Church Administrator who would manage the physical plant, the business matters of the church and supervise maintenance personnel. The 1981 budget provided for a part-time person, but the recommendation was that the church go full-time immediately.

The second suggestion was for the Educational Director who would manage the educational program with all the organizations and age-group emphases and also supervise the educational staff and be in charge of outreach ministry.

The third suggestion was for a Youth-Singles/Activities Minister to work with the youth and the large number of singles in the church and direct the sports and recreational program.

The WMU participated in the Associational Annual Session March 20-21, 1981, with guest speaker Alma Hunt, past WMU Executive Director. Also participating was Elias Galonka, New York City missionary. The WMU had been assigned home missionary Donald Gurney to remember during Home Mission Emphasis.

April 1981 began with a Dedication Service for Mark and Susan Andrews to the Foreign Mission Field, Providence's first seminary couple to be so dedicated. Mark was the son of Bill and Connie Andrews, our missionaries to Chile. Mark and Susan were assigned to La Serena, Chile, a city without evangelical witness, and they would be counting on Providence's support through the Cooperative Program, as well as through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

The Sunday School Training Program offered two adult seminars in April: *1981 Doctrine Study—The Doctrine of the Church* led by Rev. L. D. Ussery, a retired Baptist minister, and a *Personal Journey Toward Easter* led by church member Gertrude Royal.

In the April 20, 1981 **Pastorgram**, Pastor Crouch announced that he had received a letter from Dennis and Janet Kirkley with the news that they had been commissioned as missionaries by the Canadian Mission Board and would be assigned to Indonesia to work in a new Bible School. Dennis grew up in Providence and, thus, became the second of our young men to serve as a foreign missionary.

The April 27 **Pastorgram** carried the announcement that Eddie Payne, son of Mr. and Mrs. Meredith Payne had been named Athletics Director and Head Basketball Coach at Belmont Abbey College. Eddie grew up in Providence and later became a basketball star at Wake Forest University. Two large photographs of Eddie Payne and Bobby Jones hang in the church Activities Center.

The **Pastorgram** also announced that Rev. George Bullard was being transferred to Atlanta as a part of his job with the Home Mission Board. In addition, it announced that the church had received a Memorial Gift for the sanctuary sound system from Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Beaver in memory of Mrs. George Swicegood, the oldest member of the church upon her April death.

May 1981 began with the Family Life Conference at Carmel Baptist Church with the theme, "Turning Points: Which Way for Families." The guest speaker was Dr. Cecil Sherman, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Asheville and President of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention. From August 1997-June 1998, Dr. Sherman served as Providence's Interim Preaching Minister.

The annual spring revival was May 3-6, 1981, preceded by a seminar entitled *Getting Ready for Revival* led by Charles Stroud. Sunday, May 3, was High Attendance Day with a goal of 1,000 persons in Sunday School; however, the actual attendance was 822. The guest revivalist was Dr. Charles Fuller, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Roanoke, Virginia. Dr. Fuller was ably supported by the Youth and Sanctuary Choirs directed by Lowell Dotson.

The May 4, 1981, **Pastorgram** announced that Wake Forest University at its May 18 graduation exercises would confer upon

Pastor Crouch the honorary degree, Doctor of Divinity. He would deliver the Baccalaureate Address to the graduating class on Sunday evening, May 17. *Congratulations.....Dr. Crouch!*

While in Winston-Salem, the Crouchs shared in daughter Sarah's graduation from Meredith College with a degree in Art Education. Sarah was the wife of Keithen Tucker, former Summer Youth Associate, who was receiving his Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Seminary. Keithen was Pastor of a Baptist church in Pittsboro, North Carolina.

During the May 17 vesper hour, the Music Ministry presented a program of classical and religious music featuring Lowell Dotson and Patty McBrayer. Many of the selections had been requested by individual church members.

The May 18 *Pastorgram* announced that John Gaines had accepted the call to be the Summer Associate and would meet with adults and youth to formulate plans for the summer activities. In addition, the Pastor and Personnel Committee announced that former Providence Minister of Education Wendell Sloan had been hired as the first full-time Church Administrator. Wendell would be responsible to the pastor for supervising the maintenance of house and grounds, for food services, for purchasing, for bookkeeping and financial operations, for central office, organization and management, and for all personnel files.

Providence celebrated its 27th Anniversary on Sunday, May 24, 1981, with one morning service, followed by dinner-on-the-grounds. The day closed with a somber Service of Remembrance for prior members who had passed away.

The May 25 *Pastorgram* carried a special thanks to Ed Landrus for serving as Interim Church Administrator and helping fill the gap left by the departure of Steve Hoffman and Wade Tucker. As the Pastor stated: *Ed celebrated a birthday on Sunday and, in August, will complete five years on our staff. He has been a tremendous worker and partner in our ministry. He has been willing to take on any task, even cooking, to keep things going.*

June 1981 began with a vesper hour concert by the Youth Choir entitled "Breakfast in Galilee," based upon Peter, James and John's encounter with Jesus while they were fishing. The setting was after the Resurrection, and they gathered around the campfire to share the

breakfast Jesus had prepared. All of the soloists and Biblical characters featured church youth, and a special thanks went to Tom Baker and John Gaines for helping with the sound and tape.

The vesper hour on June 14 was a concert by the Sanctuary Choir entitled "A Festival of Praise." Following the service, a reception honored new church members and choir members.

On June 15, 1981, Pastor Crouch announced that Stan Yancey, a recent graduate of Campbell University, would be the Summer Youth Minister at the Candlewyck Mission. Stan was president of the Baptist Student Union at Campbell and planned to enroll in a seminary in September.

The annual Youth Mission Trip North was June 20-28, 1981. Ed Landrus and John Gaines trained the youth to conduct a Bible School in Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania. They would also sing to church and community groups as a part of their ministry.

The June 29, 1981, *Pastorgram* carried several interesting references. First, Lowell Dotson would complete 12 years as Minister of Music on July 1. As Pastor Crouch stated: *He was our first full-time musician and the evidence of his leadership can be felt in every worship service. The present choir is the best in the city and we are thrilled after each performance. We express our gratitude to Lowell and Sallie for their family's influence in our midst.*

Second, Bill and Audrey Robertson, missionaries to the Philippines, were visiting and would speak at the Wednesday Prayer Meeting. Through the years, Providence had supported their mission work in a variety of ways. Third, the Music Committee and the deacons recommended to the Associational Ordination Committee that Patty McBrayer be ordained to the ministry of music.

Pastor Crouch announced that the North Carolina Baptist Children's Home had hired Steve Hoffman to be the new Director of Family Services for the Charlotte area, effective July 1, 1981. The Hoffmans would continue to live in Charlotte, and his office would be in the Baptist Building.

There was a special called business meeting at both morning services on July 26, 1981, to discuss calling Rev. Lehman (Lee) McDonald to be the Associate Pastor in charge of Education and Programs. Lee, a native of Savannah, Georgia, grew up as a very

active lay person. His training was from Southwestern Seminary, which included growth principles and personal evangelism. His position, at the time of the call, was Associate Pastor for Education and Administration, Central Baptist Church of Warner Robbins, Georgia. He and his wife, Connie, had two young daughters. Lee accepted the call on July 27 and would begin on September 1. As Associate Pastor for Education and Programs, he was responsible to the pastor for planning, organizing, coordinating and evaluating the educational programs and services of the church as well as supervising all church employees.

During the July 26 vesper hour, Rev. Dennis Kirkley was the guest speaker. He and his wife, Janet, were in training to go as missionaries to Indonesia. Steve Smith, another Providence youth and Pastor of Arlington Baptist Church, was the vesper hour speaker on August 2. Steve was the son of Sonny and Rena Smith.

While the Crouches were vacationing in Lake Lure during early August 1981, the pulpit was filled on August 9 by Rev. Gary Kaufman, Pastor of Fork Baptist Church in Virginia. At the vesper hour another Providence ordained minister and Summer Associate, David Cromer, delivered a sermon entitled "Can Worry Save Your Hair?" On August 16, Rev. Ken Helms, a retired Baptist minister and Providence member, preached the morning services. The vesper hour message was delivered by Summer Associate John Gaines.

The Crouches returned from vacation on August 23, 1981, and Pastor Crouch preached the morning messages. The vesper hour message was delivered by Rev. Sam Rutland, III, who grew up at Providence and was serving as the Associate Pastor at Sharon Baptist Church. Following the service, a reception honored David Cromer and John Gaines, the Summer Associates, who would be returning to seminary studies.

In late August and early September 1981, as Providence readied for a new church year, Pastor Crouch stated: *Today we are in the role of leader in our denomination and our facilities on a campus of 25 acres shows foresight and the blessings of God. It's time we dream a new dream, set new goals, reach out to be the church God wants us to be in our city and denomination.*

This statement was followed by the Long-Range Planning Committee theme of "Reach" for the years of 1982-1986 which

stated: *Providence is in a prime position to grow and reach people.The real issue is do we, as members of Providence, really want to pay the price to grow or support the kind of church that will grow?*

As September 1981 arrived, the McDonalds had been "pounded" by the congregation and were settling into their new home. News arrived that Charles "Chuck" Edwards, who had been ordained by Providence, had graduated from Furman University with a 4.0 grade average and was entering Southern Seminary for the fall term.

On September 13, 1981, the Candlewyck Mission became the Candlewyck Baptist Church. Dr. Cecil Ray, General Secretary-Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention, preached the sermon for the special occasion. Dr. W. Perry Crouch was serving as Interim Pastor. Since the mission began in March 1979, several Providence members actively helped them: Ramon and Maude Sudderth, Roy and Lukin Hudnall, and Steve and Mary Smith. In addition, Charles Stroud served as chair of the Candlewyck Steering Committee.

The North Carolina State Missions Emphasis began in September 1981. The North Carolina goal was \$2,750,000 with the Providence goal set at \$3,700. This was one offering designed to support all of North Carolina's Baptist institutions.

The September 21, 1981, *Pastorgram* announced that Providence's Agriculture Missionary had been appointed. He was Dr. John Mullins, a recent graduate of the University of Tennessee School of Veterinary Medicine. He visited Providence on September 23 to meet the people who had raised the \$20,000 for his work in the Upper Volta of South Africa.

The new church year began on September 29 with the WMU Leadership Workshop sponsored by the Mecklenburg Baptist Association at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church. The workshop provided training for all the WMU officers and leaders. This was followed by Baptist Women's Day on October 6. Margaret Hilton led the group in praying for missions around the world as well as developing an effective prayer life for individuals. The guest speaker was Alma Hunt, who spoke on "Ingathering of Baptist Women." For 26 years she served as Executive Secretary of the Southern Baptist Missionary Union.

On October 4, 1981, Henry Crouch began his fourteenth year as pastor. As the September 28 *Pastorgram* stated:

The historical record of these past 13 years reflects an exciting adventure in growth and expansion. Come and be a part of this special Sunday in the life of our church as our pastor begins his fourteenth year of ministry here marked by the beginning of a new church year and the first Sunday of five years of 'REACH, An Adventure in Faith,' 1982-1987.

The guest speaker for the October 11 vesper hour was Rev. Charles A. Ambrose of Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Rev. Ambrose was Henry Crouch's roommate in college, spoke at his tenth anniversary and was the last pastor on one of Providence's summer mission trips. In 1980, he was the president of the State Convention in New Jersey.

On Sunday night, October 18, 1981, Patty McBrayer was ordained to the Gospel Ministry. As Lowell Dotson stated in the **Pastorgram**: *Many of her special friends and family members will be our guests and you will want to greet them following this Ordination Service. Our prayers and best wishes go out to Patty as she follows the call from her Lord to become a Minister of the Gospel spreading the love and good news of Christ through music and ministry.* Dr. Ken Altom, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Kannapolis, preached the ordination sermon.

Much of October and November of 1981 was taken up with the budget preparation and presentation for 1982 and the Baptist State Convention in Greensboro, where the main issue was the location of the new Baptist Headquarters Building. The decision was made to keep it in Raleigh.

In a business session on November 1, the church approved a 1982 budget of \$900,000, a 17% increase over 1981 and the first step in the five-year program to "Reach out." This was followed on November 2 by the Music Ministry's concert featuring Celia Neville on the flute and Pamela Seagraves-Radford on the piano. The concert was a mixture of popular and sacred hymns.

On November 18, the WMU held its 1981 Foreign Mission Study exploring West Africa, with special guides from the countries of Senegal, Upper Volta, and Togo. The evening was topped off with a delicious authentic African meal.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, held November 29-December 6, 1981, was filled with dramas, topics on a variety of

foreign nations and special prayer groups. The Providence Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was \$26,600.

From December 5-6, 1981, Providence co-sponsored with the George Shinn Foundation a special emphasis for the ministers from Fruitland, a Baptist school for ministers located in Hendersonville. These are men called of God, generally later in life, without the basic requirements of education to enter college or seminary. They go to Fruitland for study and to prepare themselves for ministry as Baptist preachers. Providence's role was to collect clothing for the men and their families.

Christmas at Providence in 1981 was music, worship, Foreign Missions and fellowship time. The music began at the December 13 vesper hour with Gian Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Riders" concert. The story of Amahl is a beautiful Christmas drama about a poor peasant mother and her crippled child who are visited by the Three Kings on their way to visit the Christ Child. The cast members were: Mother (Melanie Myers), Amahl (Noelle Player), Kaspar (Marvin Burke), Melchoir (Lowell Dotson), Balthazar (Sam Holshouser), and the Page (Gary Grant). Ashley Tate was the dancer, and members of the Sanctuary Choir were the Chorus of Shepherds. The accompanist was Patty McBrayer.

The Christmas celebration continued on December 20 with the annual Candlelight Service followed by "Christmas at Providence" in the fellowship hall, a time of fellowship and entertainment for the whole family. The Christmas Eve Service consisted of Elizabeth and Wolfgang Roth on the harp and violin, the Handbell Choirs and the organ. The service concluded with Lee McDonald's message, "In Search of the Christ."

The December 28, 1981, *Pastorgram* announced that Rev. Ken and Martha Helms had been called to assume the pastorate of the Euto Baptist Church in New Salem, North Carolina, effective January 3, 1982. The last church activity of 1981 was the December 31 Watch Night Service at 11:15 pm.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1981, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Ken Altom, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Kannapolis

Rev. Charles A. Ambrose, Pastor, Cherry Hill Baptist, NJ

Rev. Mark Andrews, Awaiting assignment to Chile Mission Field

Mr. David Cromer, Summer Associate

Dr. Charles Fuller, Pastor, First Baptist, Roanoke, VA

Mr. John Gaines, Summer Associate

Rev. Ken Helms, Retired Baptist Minister

Rev. Steve Hoffman, Minister with Youth

Rev. Gary Kaufman, Son of former Minister of Education, Dean Kaufman

Rev. Dennis Kirkley, Baptist Pastor in Canada, awaiting assignment to Mission Field

Rev. Sam Rutland, III, Associate Pastor, Sharon Baptist

Dr. T. C. Smith, Professor of New Testament, Southern Seminary

Rev. Steve Smith, Pastor, Arlington Baptist Church

Rev. Ruth E. Thompson, Providence Member

Rev. Wade Tucker, Minister with Adults

On January 4, 1982, the weekly *Pastorgram* was issued with a new name: *InReach*. Its first announcement was that Providence had exceeded the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$26,600 by over \$2,000. The primary activity reported in this first *InReach* was the Training Workshop for Teaching Conversational English at the church January 14-16, coordinated by Gail Seastrom.

The focus during January 1982 was the church Training Program which offered eight seminars designed to assist every age group. A few of the leaders were: Carl Bailey, Bill Blankenship, Edna Mae Fisher and Shirley Wingate. The WMU was also active in January 1982 with emphasis upon the WMU's history and programs.

February 1982 began with Baptist Women's Day. One of the Bible Study Groups was led by Kitty Crouch, wife of Dr. W. Perry Crouch. The General Meeting speaker was Betty Harris, Director of Community Services for the City of Charlotte.

The WMU Focus Week was February 14-20, 1982, beginning with a WMU Tea, followed by a Mission Action Workshop and culminating with the GA Mother/Daughter Banquet on February 18.

March 1982 began with the Home Mission Study Course entitled "Challenge of the Cities." The object of the course was to get church members to love the city, to understand and respond to the challenge

that urban changes present to Southern Baptists with their rural roots. This was followed by the Week of Prayer for Home Missions with the theme, "The World Is Here." The Southern Baptist Convention goal for the Annie Armstrong Offering was \$22,000,000 and the Providence goal \$18,000. The Home Mission Board assigned missionary Henry Colbert to Providence for contact and remembrance in prayer during the Home Mission Emphasis. Henry was serving as a bi-vocational consultant in Colorado.

On Tuesday mornings in March, Providence began a new way of reaching out, called a Bible Coffee Dialogue for mothers of preschoolers, Preschool and Mother's Morning Out. Jackie Cromer began the series with a dialogue on the book of Mark.

On March 18, the Music Ministry sponsored a concert by the College Choir of the First Baptist Church of Auburn, Alabama. The choir was on a spring tour, and area Auburn graduates were invited to attend the performance of "An Evening of Worship Through Sacred Music."

The March 15, 1982, *InReach* announced that John Gaines, the 1981 Summer Associate, would return to assist with the Summer Youth Program. This announcement coincided with the March 21-28 Youth Week during which the youth would participate and lead in most of the church programs. The week ended with the annual Youth Banquet at the Western Sizzlin on Independence Boulevard.

On March 28, the Sanctuary Choir participated in the Salisbury Community Arts presentation of Handel's "Messiah." Providence's choir, along with several other invited choral groups and church choirs, joined the Salisbury Symphony in the 25th Anniversary Concert at Catawba College. Minister of Music Lowell Dotson was the guest bass soloist for the performance.

Providence observed Holy Week 1982, April 4-8, beginning on Palm Sunday at the April 4 morning services, followed that evening by the Sanctuary Choir's presentation of Handel's "Messiah." The week ended with the Maundy Thursday Communion Service.

The WMU observed Baptist Women's Day on April 6 which included a Coffee, Bible Study led by Kitty Crouch, and a General Meeting featuring Rev. Frank Marks, Pastor of Eastern Hills Baptist Church. He reported on his mission trip to Zimbabwe.

The April 5 *InReach* announced that a new parking lot was ready to open as a symbol of Providence's new growth. As Pastor Crouch stated: *With 67 new parking places, we can minister to a lot of new people with improved facilities.* This was followed by an announcement in the April 12 *InReach* that church member Joanne Compton would serve the Mecklenburg Baptist Association WMU in 1983 as Baptist Women's Director.

The annual revival was April 25-28, 1982, preceded by cottage prayer meetings, prayer groups and visitation focus for the community. The guest revivalist was Dr. John F. Mills. As Pastor Crouch stated: *He directs the work of hundreds of Southern Baptist Convention missionaries in South Africa as the Area Director. He has been a pastor and a missionary. He has experienced Christ at work in many places in our world.*

May 1982 began with the Baptist Women's Day Coffee, a Bible Study led by Cheryl Shore, Margaret Hilton, and Carolyn Strowd and ended with a General Meeting featuring Billie Gates from the Family Support Center.

The May 10, 1982, *InReach* carried special "congratulations" to three Providence members: (1) Nancy Stokes had received her Ph.D. from UNC-G; (2) Rev. David Cromer had been employed as Minister to Youth at Memorial Baptist Church in Buie's Creek, North Carolina; and (3) Dr. Grady Wilson had received an honorary doctorate degree from Southwest Baptist University in Missouri, and Wilson Hall, a new dormitory, had been named for him.

On May 14, 1982, a Gala Dinner/Program or Adult Fellowship Dinner was held with a Country/Western theme. The church youth served and helped with the entertainment. George Hamilton, IV, Providence's International Ambassador of Country Music was the guest entertainer. A great time was had by all.

On May 16, Providence celebrated its 28th Anniversary with dinner-on-the-grounds following the 11:00 am worship service. The day's highlight was the vesper hour Memorial Service for deceased members.

During the May 23, 1982 vesper hour, the Young Musicians presented "The Rainbow Express," a serious fun musical about God's promise to Noah. The two stars were Lowell Dotson as Noah and Lee McDonald as Noah's conscience. The concert was produced and

directed by Patty McBrayer. This was followed on May 30 by a concert featuring bass-baritone Michael Whitley and Margaret Louise Norwood on the piano. Mike had served as Interim Organist at Providence in the early 1970s and had been studying voice in New York since leaving the Charlotte area. It was a marvelous, inspiring performance.

June 1982 began with the Baptist Women's meeting with a Coffee, a Bible Study taught by Kitty Crouch, and a General Meeting with guest speaker Dr. Chip Sloan, Co-Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church. Dr. Sloan had just returned from a volunteer mission trip to the country of Togo in West Africa.

The June 7 *InReach* announced that two Providence members had graduated from seminary: Menda Sue Godfrey-Hatfield graduated from Southern Seminary with a Master's Degree in Religious Education, and Rev. Sei Hun Kim, Pastor of Providence's Korean Mission, graduated from Southeastern Seminary with a Master of Divinity Degree. On June 14, 1982, Rev. Kim submitted his resignation, effective upon the arrival of the new pastor of the Korean Fellowship. He continued to serve, while obtaining more ministerial skills.

Much of June 1982 was filled with discussion about and participation in the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, the annual Vacation Bible School and maintaining the budget during vacation season.

In the June 28 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch, following his participation in the Southern Baptist Convention, warned about the impending takeover of the Convention by the conservative fundamentalists and the potential dangers to the Cooperative Program as a result. He was especially concerned about the takeover impact on the worldwide mission program and the personnel working in the program.

On July 1, 1982, Lowell Dotson started his fourteenth year as Minister of Music. He left on July 14 with the 30-member Youth Mission Choir and 10 adults for a three-week mission trip to Winslow, Arizona, where they led Bible Schools and worship services on a Navaho Indian Reservation. The Youth Choir sang for these services and at churches along the way. Summer Associates John Gaines and Land Hite prepared them well for this mission.

On Sunday, July 11, 1982, Dr. and Mrs. Joe Craig were commissioned as Mission Volunteers for a project in the Philippines. As Pastor Crouch stated in the July 12 ***InReach***: *It is a wonderful experience to have lay people as a part of our mission thrust, especially at their own expense and time.*

Candlewyck Baptist Church dedicated its first building on July 11, 1982, with Pastor Crouch preaching the Dedication Sermon at the evening service. Candlewyck had called Rev. David Hull of Shelbyville, Kentucky, to follow Dr. W. Perry Crouch as pastor, and he would begin his ministry on August 1. His wife, Jane, was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Shannon of Providence.

Associate Pastor Lee McDonald announced in the August 2, 1982, ***InReach*** that the church had elected Gerry Cofer as its Prayer Coordinator. Creating this position was a key part of the five-year Reach Program.

On August 8, 1982, the Music Ministry sponsored a concert by the College Ensemble from the University Hills Baptist Church. Lamar Helms was the director of the ensemble that was famous for its singing in churches and associational gatherings throughout the Charlotte area. They provided an exciting witness through song.

Most of August and September 1982 was spent in closing out one church year and preparing for a new one. The first September function was the Baptist Women's Day, followed that evening by the Baptist Men's Fellowship Dinner.

The September 13 ***InReach*** carried an interesting notice inquiring whether anyone was interested in purchasing the old parsonage, moving/tearing it down or moving it to a lot on Plum Nearly. It did not say whether anyone had accepted the challenge.

The September 1982 mission focus was on the North Carolina Missions Offering for State Missions Ministries, North Carolina Baptist Men, Children's Homes, Baptist Hospital, Baptist Homes, Christian Homes and WMU. The focus theme was "Hope Is Something You Give, When Someone Needs Your Love." The Providence goal was \$4,600.

In called conference on October 3, 1982, the church voted to call Rev. Robert L. Lentz, Jr. (Nancy) as Minister with Youth. Rev. Lentz graduated with honors from Moody Bible Institute in 1975 with a degree in Foreign Missions. Prior to coming to Providence, he was

Associate Pastor/Youth and Evangelism at Park Street Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina. He had also been actively involved with Evangelism Explosion Ministry in addition to his youth ministry responsibilities. Following the vesper hour on October 24, a “pounding” and reception welcomed Nancy and Bob, who began his youth ministry on October 31.

November 1982 was filled with explanations and calls to church members to catch up on the 1982 budget and pledge toward the 1983 budget. The activity highlight of the month was the Music Ministry’s presentation of “Lottie D: The Story of Lottie Moon” and her mission work in China, with Melanie Myers as Lottie Moon. The production began the church’s emphasis leading toward the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. The Providence offering goal was \$35,000.

The 1982 Christmas and holiday season began on December 5 with the Hanging of the Greens and seasonal music featuring the Children’s Choirs. On December 12, a “Service of Carols and Music of the Season” featured Lowell Dotson (baritone), Gary Grant (tenor), John Quillan (cello) and Patricia McBrayer (organ). On December 19, the annual Candlelight Service featured soloists Lowell Dotson and Melanie Myers, followed on December 22 by “Christmas at Providence,” a time of fellowship and entertainment for the whole family. The guest was George Hamilton, IV, Providence’s Country Music Ambassador to the World. It was a great evening.

College Day on December 26, 1982, was the last event of the year. The worship leaders during the services were college students home for the holidays. The children’s sermon was given by Land Hite, and the testimonies were given by Trip Ashe, Margaret Landrus and Tony Seagraves.

During Pastor Crouch’s absence in 1982, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Dr. Bill Crouch, Pastor’s Son and Dean of Gardner-Webb College

Dr. Roy Honeycutt, President, Southern Seminary

Dr. John Mills, Director for West Africa for Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board

Dr. Robert Nash, Retired Baptist Pastor

Rev. Ruth Thompson, Providence Member

In the January 3, 1983 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated: *We welcome 1983 with a great deal of enthusiasm and expectation. Hopefully, members will renew their commitments to Christ and His church.....One of our greatest needs this year is to develop a growth mentality. We are instructed in the Scripture to be 'fruit bearers' and, like Andrew, we are to bring our brothers to Christ.*

The first event of 1983 was the Baptist Men's Fellowship Dinner on January 10. The guest speaker was Richard Steele of the JAARS Corporation in Waxhaw.

The 1983 budget pledges fell short by \$21,334 of the total needed of \$1,020,000. In addition, the Lottie Moon Offering was short by \$5,150.54 of the \$35,000 goal. Thus, there was a renewed effort in January to complete these goals.

The annual Bible Study Course was held January 16-19 with classes for all age levels. Guest teacher Dr. Donald E. Cook, Professor of New Testament at Southeastern Seminary, taught the book of First Peter.

Other January 1983 training and fellowship opportunities for members were: The Baptist Counseling Center's course entitled "Woman: A Unique Creation," taught by Terra Gay Williams; "Baptist Doctrine," taught by Dr. Perry Crouch during training sessions; and the Better Homes Club meeting. The month ended with the January 29 Regional Prayer Breakfast featuring the Rev. Leighton Ford.

On February 1, 1983, Lowell Dotson announced that the Music Ministry had received three Achievement Awards for Musical Excellence in Programming and Ministry through music in the local church. Providence was one of two North Carolina churches to achieve this recognition. The awards came through the Music Ministry Achievement Program set up through the Southern Baptist Convention Music Program in Nashville, Tennessee.

In early February, Pastor Crouch announced "five special appreciations." First, J. E. Dorsey added to the sound system by purchasing a high quality microphone for the pulpit that would make speech more audible to the audience. Second, Charles Tucker gave 110 copies of the hard-back edition of the *New International Bible* for the sanctuary. In addition, Tom Baker, Bill Blankenship and Paula

Williams gave 25 *Bibles* each to be placed in the sanctuary balcony.

February 1983 began with Providence hosting a Singles Weekend Awareness Conference for the Charlotte area, with guest speaker Dr. Reid Doster conducting workshops on *Self-esteem*, *Loneliness and Depression*, and *Building Healthy Relationships*. This was followed by the February 26 Study for Home Missions entitled "How to Grow Churches or Sod-busters," with guest speaker Rev. Glen Akins.

March 1983 began with the Carson-Newman College A Cappella Choir concert. The choir, composed of 40 singers competitively chosen from across the country, had earned a strong national reputation since beginning their singing ministry in 1946. It was a great evening.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 6-13, 1983, with the theme, "God's Challenge for Our Land," culminating in the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The national goal was \$25,000,000 and the Providence goal \$9,900. The guest speakers for the week were Rev. Tim Larkin, Associate Pastor at the Uptown Baptist Church in Chicago, and Delores Diaz, Director of the Southern Baptist Convention WMU Auxiliary.

On Sunday, March 6, 1983, the Music Ministry sponsored the Furman Singers for the 11:00 am worship service. The choir was under the direction of Dr. Bingham Vick, Jr., and the Providence concert was part of their annual tour.

March 20, 1983, was High Attendance Day with a goal of 950 for the Sunday School Enlargement Campaign. On Sunday night, March 27, the Easter/Music Drama entitled "Joy Comes in The Morning" was memorized, costumed, staged and presented by the Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by 23 members of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. It was truly a memorable, spirit-filled performance for those in attendance.

Sunday afternoon, March 27, Dr. Billy Graham was in Charlotte for the dedication of the Billy Graham Parkway, which denoted the great contribution he had made to Charlotte and the nation. Dr. John Burnette, a Providence member and a member of the North Carolina Highway Commission, invited Pastor Crouch to deliver the benediction at the meeting at the Charlotte Executive Park Center.

During early April 1983, Providence was busy preparing to participate in the Leighton Ford Charlotte Area Crusade at the Charlotte Coliseum. Providence members were active as committee members, prayer leaders, choir members and in various other support roles for the highly successful crusade.

The Ford Crusade was followed on April 17-20 by the annual Providence revival with guest revivalist Dr. Alastair Walker, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Spartanburg. Lowell Dotson directed the church choirs in support of the revival efforts.

Sunday, April 24, 1983, was the last day at Providence for Minister with Youth Bob Lentz and his family. Bob announced his interest in entering Southwestern Seminary to prepare himself to become a pastor. Nancy, Bob and Zack were honored at a reception following the vesper hour. As Associate Pastor Lee McDonald stated: *Our prayers and love will go with them as they leave us to begin a new pilgrimage.*

At the May 1 vesper hour, the Young Musicians, grades 1-6, presented "Down by the Creekbank," a musical about life and our relationship to God. The production was directed by Patty McBrayer. It was a wonderful performance. As Lowell Dotson proudly announced: *We think they are the best choir around.*

The May 9, 1983, ***InReach*** announced that the Korean Mission had called Rev. Dennis P. Kim as their first full-time pastor. Rev. Kim received his Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Seminary and had previously served Korean churches in High Point and Cary. Rev. Kim was ordained in 1980 by the First Baptist Church of Jamestown, North Carolina, and was installed at Providence on May 19.

Providence celebrated its 29th Anniversary on May 15, 1983. In addition to the worship and dinner-on-the-grounds, the special musical guest was composer Dale Peterson, Minister of Music at the First Baptist Church of Auburn, Alabama. Composer Peterson had been commissioned to write the 29th Anniversary Anthem entitled "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken," featuring the Sanctuary Choir, three trumpets, organ and baritone solo. It was an awe-inspiring performance.

May 15-22, 1983, was Youth Week with the youth teaching Sunday School classes and leading the vesper service. The highlight

of the week was the Youth Banquet on Saturday evening. High School seniors were honored on Sunday, May 29, with a breakfast at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Barry Welborne and lunch at the Carmel Country Club.

The May 23 *InReach* announced that Land Hite, a rising senior at Southeastern Seminary, would return as the Summer Associate to work with the youth. The youth program was suffering while the Personnel Committee was searching for a new Minister with Youth.

During the summer of 1983, Providence hosted Mark and Karen Douglas, students at Southeastern Seminary, as a Praxis Team (Summer Intern Program) to the Mecklenburg Baptist Association from the State Baptist Convention. Their task was to survey the Sardis Road North area for a potential new Baptist church site. Mark led the Wednesday night service on June 6.

During the week of June 13, 1983, the Southern Baptist Convention met in Pittsburgh. Pastor Crouch and ten other Providence messengers attended, with concern. As he stated in the June 13 *InReach*:

We need your prayers. For the past four years there has been division and a loss of trust. We have 'labeled our brothers,' cast suspicions, and responded in un-Christian ways to one another. Presently, I am disturbed that a growing trend toward polarization into different camps has taken some of the luster from our ministry to people. The drive toward uniformity of belief and practice tends to make us lose our individuality and independence.

The June 13, 1983, *InReach* also announced that Sarah Watson had joined the staff as Receptionist, succeeding Lisa Carnes. Prior to joining Providence, Sarah had served at Pritchard Memorial and the First Baptist Church of Wadesboro.

On July 1, 1983, Lowell Dotson celebrated his fourteenth anniversary. As Pastor Crouch stated in the July 4 *InReach*:

When Lowell arrived on the scene in 1969, we had a small investment in our music program. Through the years we have watched the facilities grow and improve with a fully-equipped music library, practice room, offices, robing rooms, a magnificent pipe organ for the sanctuary, an electric organ in the fellowship hall, handbells and Orff instruments for the

graded choir program. A full graded choir program for children, a youth choir, the adult choir, and handbells for youth and adults highlight the offerings for our people in music.

The 1983 Youth Mission Trip was July 22-30 to Orlando, Florida, where they conducted three simultaneous Bible Schools and gave four musical concerts. Their task was to share Christ's love and joy. The trip was planned to prepare for spiritual growth, educational and missionary activity, and to foster permanent Christian friendships and fellowship among the youth. Twenty-one youth and eight adults participated. Austin Moody was the Mission Trip Coordinator, assisted by Lowell Dotson and Land Hite.

In called conference on August 7, 1983, the church voted to call the Rev. Tommy Hall as Minister with Youth. Rev. Hall was a 1973 graduate of Pembroke State University and received a Master of Divinity/Religious Education Degree from Southeastern Seminary in 1978. He and his wife, Diane, had three children: Jason, Leslie and David. Prior to his call, Rev. Hall served as Minister of Education and Youth at the First Baptist Church of Hickory. He began his Providence ministry on August 22, 1983.

As August 1983 drew to a close, Providence said *goodbye* to the Praxis Team of Mark and Karen Douglas, who had worked hard to lay the groundwork for a new Baptist church in the Sardis Road area. They returned to Southeastern Seminary for their last year of study. Land Hite, the Summer Associate, also returned to Southeastern for his final year. As Pastor Crouch stated: *He has been a happy worker, friend, and enabler in our midst. His warm personality, deep interest in our youth, and enthusiastic input have made a big difference. We are grateful that he passed our way!*

Starting September 1, 1983, Providence began a new Sunday evening format which eliminated Training Union. The new format called for a Sunday School Officers and Teachers' Meeting at 6:00 pm. The Youth Choirs would also begin at 6:00 pm, with no suppers planned at the church. Everyone would then go quickly into the evening worship experience.

On September 1, 1983, Providence's annual focus on the North Carolina Missions Offering for Baptist Institutions began with the theme, "Hope Is Something You Give, When It Seems No One

Cares.” The North Carolina offering goal was \$2,750,000, and the Providence goal was \$4,777.

Providence celebrated two anniversaries on September 1. Ed Landrus, Minister with Children, celebrated his seventh year, and Lee McDonald, Associate Pastor, celebrated his second year. Both were valuable, special members of the church staff.

During August and September 1983, there was much discussion and planning toward the renovation of existing facilities to meet growth needs in the nursery and young adult areas. In addition, the Long-Range Planning Committee was asked to study the feasibility of a Family Life Center on the site of the old parsonage.

The September 12, 1983, *InReach* announced that Southeastern Seminary was naming “Crouch” to its endowed chair of preaching, entitled “Chair of Homiletics and Communication,” because three generations of Crouches had close ties to the institution. Two of them, Dr. W. Perry Crouch and Dr. Bill Crouch, had ties to Providence.

On September 30, there was a Sunday School Banquet to “kickoff” the new church year. The guest speaker was Dr. Tom Nettles, a nationally prominent author, entertainer and professor. He also held a workshop for adults on October 1.

In called conference on September 18, 1983, the church voted unanimously to adopt a 1984 budget of \$1,128,000. The congregation, to honor Pastor Crouch, also voted to establish the “Dr. William Henry Crouch Ministerial Scholarship” at Wake Forest University.

October 4, 1983, was Baptist Women’s Day with a Coffee, Bible Study groups led by Kitty and Jan Crouch, and a General Session featuring Nancy Kistler, a Charlotte businesswoman and volunteer with the Mecklenburg Baptist Association to Indonesia in September 1983.

The September 26 *InReach* announced that Chris Lockee had been selected as 1983 Teacher-of-the-Year at McClintock Junior High School. Quite an honor for Chris!

Henry Crouch began his sixteenth year as pastor on October 1, 1983. As he stated in the September 26 *InReach*: *This is the end of 15 years as Pastor and these sentiments seem very real to our family.*

We have shared not only the gospel but our lives with you, joining our destiny with your destiny, and it has now become 'ours.'

At the October 2 vesper hour, the Sanctuary Choir presented a Choral Music Drama entitled "Acts" by Buryl Red, featuring Don Motsinger as Paul, Ken Fisher as Peter, Bill Caldwell as Luke, Mike Freeland as Silas, David Sanges as Ananias, Melanie Myers as Lydia, Anne Izard as Helena, and Bill White as the Jailor. The concert revealed the book of Acts before the eyes of the audience.

On October 13, 1983, the Baptist Women held their fifth annual Ingathering with the theme, "1983-84 Emphasis: Partnership in Prayer and Ministry." The guest speaker was Nancy Curtis, Executive Director, WMU of North Carolina.

October 16, 1983, was Bill Andrews Day, and he preached the 8:30 and 11:00 am sermons. Bill and Connie were in Charlotte for several months on furlough from their missionary work in Chile.

The WMU, under the direction of Mary Ann Crouch and Montez Sparks, began a tutoring program for elementary school students at the Providence Road Housing Authority during the week of October 10, 1983. Many volunteers were needed to help students with their reading skills.

October 30, 1983, was High Attendance Sunday for the Sunday School to begin the new church year. Everyone was encouraged to attend and bring a guest. The goal was 945; however, the actual attendance was 985, a Providence attendance record.

On October 31, 1983, the Long-Range Planning Committee and architect presented drawings and proposals to open the church campus into Randolph Park which would provide another exit for traffic, provide 100 new parking spaces, a full one-fourth mile dirt track, soccer field, a small league baseball field, a full-sized lighted baseball field, and four tennis courts, with adjacent restroom facilities.

The new buildings would include a Christian Life Center with dining room, kitchen and youth education facilities. A future Children's Building across the front would provide one of the best children's areas in the country. In addition, the architect proposed to remodel the first building (currently Youth Building) into a beautiful chapel and adult building (two adult departments). This would function well for small funerals and weddings as well as other uses.

The big remodeling would come as space was provided for babies and children and additional adult space by a balcony in the fellowship hall with new classes built over the office area and into the fellowship hall. As Pastor Crouch stated: *How much can we do? That is to be decided as we get serious and make our plans more definite.....The important reality is that now we will have a plan for the future which can get us excited about our goals!*

On Wednesday, November 23, 1983, Providence hosted the Community Thanksgiving Service with Trinity Presbyterian, St. Gabriel Catholic Church and Providence United Methodist as guests. Rev. Harley Dickson, Pastor of Providence United Methodist, preached the Thanksgiving Sermon. The Providence Baptist Sanctuary Choir, under the direction of Lowell Dotson, provided the music. The service culminated with a reception.

The November 21, 1983, ***InReach*** carried a "special" congratulations to Dr. Sehwan Kim, one of the Korean members, who had recently toured the Far East as a translator for President Reagan. Dr. Kim was a researcher for the Charlotte Drug Education Center and was active in the Providence Korean Mission.

On November 27, 1983, the Music Ministry presented "A Service of Music for Advent and Christmas." The concert featured Patty McBrayer on the organ and piano.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and Lottie Moon Offering was held December 4-11, 1983, with guest speaker Shirley Smith, a missionary to Liberia. The Southern Baptist Convention goal for the campaign was \$60,000,000, and the Providence goal was \$34,500.

The Christmas Advent Season was symbolized by the Advent Wreath, used to remind us of the important aspects of the birth of Christ. The four candles symbolize HOPE, PEACE, LOVE and JOY. Purple candles, used on three Sundays, signify the Royalty of Christ the King, and the rose candle symbolizes the joy that the coming of the Messiah brings! The white candle in the center, called the Christ Candle, is lit on Christmas Eve for the first time and burns through Christmas.

The Christ Candle is central in the wreath to remind us that Christ should be the center of our lives. The circular shape of the wreath is symbolic of the never-ending love of God.

The highlight of the Christmas Music Ministry was the December 11 presentation of "Amahl and the Night Visitors," starring Will Caldwell as Amahl. The concert was so popular that two performances were held. On December 18 the Sanctuary Choir, conducted by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by members of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, presented an area premiere of "The Holy Light" by Claude L. Bass.

On December 17, 1983, Pastor Crouch returned to Southern Seminary, where he attended graduate school, and delivered the mid-year Commencement Address. He and Jan were the guests of President Roy Honeycutt. They were accompanied by Dr. and Mrs. Perry Crouch, who had a part in the program.

In the December 19 *InReach*, Lowell Dotson announced that Providence member Selby Daniels had edited a new book, entitled *A Diary of Captain Henry A. Chambers*, written during the Civil War. Lowell later learned that Captain Chambers was the uncle of Providence member Jewel Oxendine.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1983, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary to Chile

Dr. Edwin Bagley, Jr., Retired Baptist Minister

Dr. Donald Cook, Professor of New Testament, Southeastern Seminary

Dr. Bill Crouch, Dean, Gardner-Webb College

Mrs. Delores Diaz, WMU Department, Southern Baptist Convention

Dr. Robert Featherstone, Billy Graham Team Member

Dr. Ernest Izard, Retired Baptist Minister

Rev. Dennis Kim, Pastor, Korean Mission

Rev. Tim Larkin, Associate Pastor, Uptown Baptist, Chicago

Rev. Lee McDonald, Providence Associate Pastor

Dr. Tom Nettles, Author, Entertainer and Professor

Dr. Bill Wakefield, Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board

Dr. Alastair Walker, Pastor, First Baptist, Spartanburg, SC

In the January 2, 1984 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated: *1983 was an interesting, exciting and successful year for us as a church.....*

However, we can't linger in 1983, we must get busy making 1984 even better.

The first 1984 activity was the annual Bible Study Course held January 8-11. Dr. Bill Angell, Professor of New Testament at Wake Forest University, taught the book of I Corinthians.

On January 25, 1984, Providence began a series of Winter Church Training Seminars: *Great Decisions on United States Foreign Policy* (UNCC); *Marriage Enrichment* (Tom O'Neal); *Quality of Christian Living* (K. Crouch); *What Baptists Believe* (P. Crouch) and *A New Testament Survey* (G. Cofer). These seminars ran on Wednesday evenings through March 21, 1984.

January 29, 1984, was Baptist Men's Day with the church men leading the morning services and providing the music. Dr. James Carpenter, a medical doctor from Seneca, South Carolina, was the guest speaker. He had served as a missionary to Indonesia and was currently serving on the Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board with Pastor Crouch.

On February 7, 1984, Baptist Women's Day began with a Coffee, followed by small study groups led by WMU leaders. The General Session speaker was Providence's own Gerry Cofer, the church Prayer Coordinator. She had just returned from a special mission trip to the Third World Countries and shared her "Emmaus Walk" with the other women.

During the early 1980s, there was much discussion and even controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention and at Providence about the role of women in the church. In the February 6, 1984 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch gave his perspective as follows:

I perceive that gender is not the determining factor; but faith in Christ. I am convinced that the differences are historical, not eternal, and that flesh has gender but the spirit doesn't! Our bodies are either male or female – but our sins, fears, guilts, and joys are not! Somewhere there lies a common humanity fashioned after a sexless God. We need to transcend all barriers, remove all prejudices, and in humility accept one another as fellow partners in the building of the Kingdom of God.

He concluded with "Our Decisions As A Church About Women In Leadership:"

- 1973 A new Constitution, with all references to sex removed.
- 1976 First women elected to serve as deacons (Dorothea Compton, Mary Ann Crouch and Janice Uttley).
- 1981 First woman ordained to the ministry (Patty McBrayer).

The February 13, 1984, *InReach* announced that Providence would add another son to the mission force in Indonesia. David Coward, son of Rod and Eva Coward, finished his training at the International Linguistics Center in Dallas and was assigned to the Maluku Islands. He would study one of the 300 unwritten languages in Indonesia and help write the Scriptures in their language. As such, David became one of the Wycliffe Bible Translators' team members, and Providence would support his ministry through prayer and financial contributions.

In called conference on February 26, the church voted to accept the land use map projected by the Long-Range Planning Committee which set into motion the development of Step One for the future. In addition, the vote approved letting the Administrative Deacons name an Ad Hoc Committee to study the feasibility of finances to meet the needs of the church. As Pastor Crouch said following the vote: *It's an exciting time to be actively involved in a growing church. We need each member to be a part of 'His Body' at Providence.*

February 1984 concluded with the Home Mission Study entitled "We Spell Missions A-M-E-R-I-C-A." The guest teacher was Jim Royston, Director of Missions, Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

March 1984 began with "New Visions, New Frontiers" as the theme for the Week of Prayer for Home Missions. The week was highlighted by small group prayer and study sessions held in the fellowship hall. The two guest speakers were Rev. Gordon Weekley, Providence's first pastor, and Terry Smith, Executive Director of the Charlotte Family Support Center. The Annie Armstrong Offering goal for Providence was \$9,615.

Baptist Heritage Week was March 11-14 with guest teacher Dr. Glen Hinson, Professor at Wake Forest University. As Associate Pastor Lee McDonald stated in the March 5 *InReach*: *Dr. Hinson is a much sought-after speaker, and we are fortunate to have him come*

and share with us. As a contemporary authority on Church History and Spirituality, Dr. Hinson will challenge you as you seek to grow in your own faith pilgrimage.

The March 12, 1984, ***InReach*** announced that Providence had been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners and the staff and residents of the Charlotte Housing Authority for leadership in sponsoring after school and resident programs at the Providence Housing Development. Special thanks went to Mary Ann Crouch and the Missions Committee for their leadership in response to this need in the community. As Lee McDonald stated:

Providence is on mission for the cause of Christ. The many Providence volunteers involved in this area have represented our church and her Lord well. May we continue to be sensitive to the needs of those around us that we might serve and honor Jesus Christ in our local activity of mission improvement.

On March 25, 1984, the Music Ministry sponsored a Youth Musical entitled "We Are The Reason," compiled by Audrey Edwards. The Youth Singers were directed by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by Patty McBrayer and Tom Baker. It was a sparkling performance.

April 1984 began with a concert entitled "It's Cool in the Furnace" presented by the Young Musicians Choir. As Patty McBrayer stated in the April 2 ***InReach***: *If you missed 'It's Cool in the Furnace,' you missed a treat! The Young Musicians did an outstanding job Sunday night. Thanks to choir members and parents who made it a success. Special thanks go to Lowell Dotson who played King Nebuchadnezzar, and Will Caldwell who played Daniel.*

On April 2, 1984, the Weekday Education Program sponsored "An Evening With Dr. John Rosemond," a well-known Charlotte area Child Psychologist. His topic for the evening was "Teaching Your Children To Be Responsible."

On April 15, the Sanctuary Choir presented its Easter music presentation, "Of Time and Eternity," accompanied by Patty McBrayer on the 52 rank Schantz Pipe Organ and a Brass and Percussion Ensemble. The soprano soloist was Melanie Myers. "Of

Time and Eternity” is a most descriptive concert about the seasons of the year and how they relate to the life of Jesus Christ.

The April 16, 1984, *InReach* carried two special “congratulations.” First, Church Secretary Bonnie Adams was selected as Woman of the Year for the Charlotte Chapter of the American Business Women’s Association. Second, in the fall of 1983, Chip Dotson was asked by his East Mecklenburg High School orchestra teacher to compose a symphonic composition for the high school orchestra, which was performed in December. Later, the composition, which he entitled “Collage of My Dreams,” won first place in the Mecklenburg County PTA competition and also won in the State PTA competition. On August 1, 1984, he won second place and received a certificate and \$150 in the National PTA competition.

The annual spring revival was held April 29-May 2, 1984, preceded by prayer sessions, Bible study and community outreach efforts. The guest revivalist was Dr. William Tanner, President of the Home Mission Board in Atlanta. Dr. Tanner had been at Providence before this revival, and the congregation loved his “rapid fire” delivery and friendliness.

The revival was followed from May 9 through June 13 by four spring seminars: *The Life and Teachings of Jesus* led by Gerry Cofer, *Great Hymns of Worship* led by Lowell Dotson, *Dialogues in Peacemaking* led by Cam Wallace, and *The Religious Journey of Captain Henry Chambers* led by Selby Daniels.

Providence celebrated its 30th Anniversary on Sunday, May 20, 1984, beginning with a Charter Member Dinner on Saturday, May 19. Dr. Cecil Ray, former Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, was the guest speaker for the Sunday morning services. Next came dinner-on-the-grounds with plenty of food and fellowship. The day ended with a service of Praise and Remembrance for former members. The highlight of the service was sacred music by the Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by strings, harp and organ. It was a service to truly remember.

June 1984 began with Baptist Women’s Day with a Coffee, followed by group meetings named after women missionaries that Providence supported, like Connie Andrews. The General Session

guest speaker was Leslie Sladky, Associate Director of the Community College and International Ministry of Charlotte.

June 1, 1984, brought two staff anniversaries. Maxine Dunn celebrated her eleventh year as Financial Secretary, and Wendell Sloan celebrated his third year as Business Manager.

The annual Southern Baptist Convention began in Kansas City on June 12, 1984. Prior to leaving for the Convention, Pastor Crouch stated:

We have been in controversy for the past five years. Some would say the problem is theology and a fight between liberals and fundamentalists. Actually, it is a power move by less involved denominational churches to take over our agencies. The power of appointment for agency trustees is tied to the presidency of the Convention. For four years now, the shift has been taking place and there is no doubt that this year the nominees are coming from churches giving little to the Cooperative Program.

This was the beginning of a power struggle that continues even today.

The June 4, 1984, ***InReach*** carried the following two announcements: First, Providence's George Hamilton, IV was an active participant in the Billy Graham Mission England Crusade. Secondly, Rev. Dennis Kim resigned as Pastor of the Korean Mission and took a job in California as Youth Minister and Associate Pastor of one of the largest Korean churches in the Southern Baptist Convention. The new pastor was Rev. Suh Suk Ku from Milwaukee, who began his Charlotte ministry on June 15, 1984.

In the June 18, 1984 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch announced that the just completed Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City had given "birth" to the Southern Baptist Convention Forum, a pre-convention session that majored on ministry, with worship as the key emphasis. Nearly 2,500 people participated in this first Forum Session. It was not a political rally but a worship experience of the highest quality. Lowell Dotson was superb in his direction of the music and helped to set the tone for the worship experience. Dr. Crouch was named the chair of the Program Committee for the 1985 Forum in Dallas. He closed his message as follows: *We are*

grateful for a fellowship that is based on ministry, worship and fellowship. Continue to pray for our denomination and for the adjustments that will come. Southern Baptists will be changing in focus, ministry and will be less open to diversity.

On July 3, 1984, Baptist Women's Day began with a Coffee, followed by small prayer and study groups. The highlight of the day was the General Session featuring Providence's own Chris Lockee as the speaker. Her subject was "The American Indians."

On July 6, Providence members Ken and Marti Helms were appointed Southern Baptist missionaries to Spain at the Foreign Mission Session at Ridgecrest. At the commissioning, Pastor Crouch presented the motion for their appointment, along with many fellow Providence members.

July 1984 was a quiet month with emphasis on vacations, youth activities and maintaining the church budget. On the summer Youth Mission Trip to a Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona, the youth taught Bible School and gave music concerts, led by Tommy and Dianne Hall. After a short "catch your breath," they conducted three back yard Bible Studies in Charlotte

During the quarterly business meeting on July 13, 1984, the Long-Range Planning Committee recommended that the church approve an expenditure of \$4,700 for the Hawkins-Kibler Associates to develop a master plan for usage of present facilities and land and additional facilities, including a Family Life Center. The request was approved unanimously.

While Pastor Crouch was vacationing at Lake Lure during the first three weeks of August, Providence welcomed three old friends to the pulpit: Dr. T. C. Smith, a Professor at Davidson and Southeastern Seminary, on August 5; Providence member Rev. Stan Craig on August 12; and Dr. James L. Maddex, Director of Baptist Visitation Ministry, on August 19.

On August 29, 1984, for the first time, Providence held a Fall Festival for Children. It began with games, cartoons and sports events and culminated with a supper of hot dogs and hamburgers.

Mike McKee's Ordination Service was held at Providence on September 2. Mike was the twelfth minister to be ordained by Providence in its 30-year history. He had been called to Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem.

The church year theme for 1984-85 was "Alive to God!" and started with eight adult fall seminars: *Family Financial Planning* (Larry Carroll); *Lovers at Heart* (Gerry Cofer); *Concentric Circles of Concern* (Joanne Compton and Connie McDonald); *Leadership Class* (Henry Crouch); *A People Called Baptists* (Perry Crouch); *Basic Vocal Production* (Lowell Dotson); *Strengthening Worship Within the Home* (Gloria Hensley), and *A History of the Bible* (Lee McDonald).

September 4, 1984, was Baptist Women's Day with the theme, "My Community: A Missions Field." The General Session speaker was Providence member Susan Jones, who spoke about "Arosa House."

September 1984 was North Carolina Missions Month with the theme, "Hope Is Something You Give." The Providence mission goal was \$4,242. The highlight of the month was the North Carolina Missions television special entitled *More Than Just A Name*, that was shown on WCCB-TV on September 10.

The Better Homes Club began the new church year on September 21 with an evening banquet. The guest speaker was Child Psychologist, Dr. John Rosemond, who spoke on the "Five Point Plan for Raising Happy and Healthy Children."

The 1985 budget was presented to church members in early September for discussion and approval. In the September 10 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch stated:

Why the special emphasis this year to pledge the full budget? Four of the past five years we have failed to raise the entire budget. That means we have neglected to do some things that we should have done. It also means that when we go looking for funds to remodel or build, the lender is more skeptical about our ability to repay the loan. If we have anything new in the future, we must be serious about raising the 1985 budget.

In the October 1, 1984 ***InReach***, Associate Pastor Lee McDonald stated:

Come join us! On October 28, be one of a thousand and more in Sunday School! We are claiming October 28, 1984, for the Glory of God as we work toward THE GREATEST DAY IN THE MORNING we have experienced in our

church. Let's pray and work towards a 'higher ground' in extending the Kingdom of God in our community by doing our part for the victory God can give us on 'GREAT DAY IN THE MORNING' October 28, 1984.

The October 19 Better Homes Club featured a \$10 steak dinner and a rousing speech by church member Tom O'Neal. Tom, Co-Director of the Baptist Hospital Counseling Center, spoke on "Anatomy of a Growing Marriage."

On October 1, 1984, Henry Crouch began his seventeenth year as Providence's pastor. As he stated in the October 8 *InReach*:

It has been an exciting and thrilling venture for me. God blessed us with a warm fellowship of faith to raise our family of four teenagers and on this site they grew into manhood and womanhood. They look back with good memories and feel that they received a strong religious heritage that should undergird them for life. You have been good to Jan and me and we feel accepted, loved, and undergirded. You have shared our failures, disappointments, concerns, frustrations, as well as our successes, thrills and blessings. We have gotten older and exchanged a full house for an empty nest. Our children have been replaced by my parents who now share our fellowship.

On October 8, 1984, Pastor Crouch announced that it *had been* his pleasure to serve Southern Baptists for 16 years on the Foreign Mission Board, the sending agency of our denomination, with 3,500 missionaries serving in 103 countries. His second term would end in May 1985.

On October 28, 1984, there was an Ordination Service for Land Hite, Jr., a graduate of UNC-CH and Southeastern Seminary (Master of Divinity Degree). In 1982 and 1983, Land was Providence's Summer Youth Associate. At the time of his Ordination, he was the Minister of Youth at Heritage Baptist Church in Annapolis, Maryland. His Ordination Sermon was preached by Dr. Fred Moffatt, Pastor of Heritage Baptist Church.

Sunday, October 28, 1984, was "Great Day in the Morning." The Sunday School attendance goal was 1,000; however, the actual attendance was 1,119. The other goal of the day to fully pledge the

budget of \$1,188,000 for 1985 fell short. As Lee McDonald stated in the October 29 *InReach*:

Sunday was truly a day of celebration as a thousand and more people came together at Providence to study the Word of God. History is changed with the most powerful demonstration of love, faith and commitment from each of you who joined in the exciting task of ministry and the building up of the body of Christ.

As a part of his work with the Foreign Mission Board, Pastor Crouch left on October 31 for Lome, Togo, to visit the village being built by North Carolina Baptists at Moretan. The village was African in style. The North Carolina volunteers were working with agriculture, well digging and road building, especially a bridge to connect one-third of the country to the mainland. Church member Tom Baker accompanied Pastor Crouch as official photographer for the journey.

November 6, 1984, was Baptist Women's Day with a Coffee, followed by small study groups and culminating in a General Session with guest speaker Rev. J. G. Goodwin, Korean Planner for the Foreign Mission Board. This was followed on November 19 by the Baptist Men's Fall Kickoff Dinner with guest speaker Dr. Bill Crouch, Director of Development for the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

Wednesday, November 21, 1984, was the annual Community Thanksgiving Service held at Providence United Methodist Church. Lowell Dotson and the Providence Sanctuary Choir led the music service.

The annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held December 3-9, 1984, with daily prayer and study sessions. The guest speaker was Paul Phillips, son of missionaries to Zimbabwe, Africa. The Providence Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was \$29,070.

The Season of Preparation for Advent began on December 2, 1984. The Advent theme was "The Light of Christ," with church members as partners sharing the light of Christ with the world through prayer, giving and going.

On December 16, the Providence Music Ministry presented George F. Handel's "Messiah" as its Christmas concert. The

Sanctuary Choir was accompanied by an orchestra and harpsichord and directed by Lowell Dotson, with Patty McBrayer on the organ. The service concluded with the annual Candlelight Service. It was truly a spirit-filled evening.

At the December 16, 1984 vesper hour, Providence honored Ken and Marti Helms who had just completed the Orientation Program for language study as foreign missionaries to Spain. This mission assignment gave Providence five missionary families: Bill and Connie Andrews, Mark and Susan Andrews, Dennis and Janet Kirkley, David and Naomi Coward, and Ken and Marti Helms.

At the December 24 vesper hour, the Youth Choirs presented a superb Christmas Eve Festival of Carols and Lessons. Everyone left inspired for Christmas. The 1984 year concluded on December 31 with observance of the Lord's Supper and collection of a World Hunger Offering. In the December 31 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch summarized some of the 1984 highlights:

We ordained two young men to the gospel ministry (Land Hite and Mike McKee) and celebrated more than 25 weddings in our sanctuary. We had only eight funerals during the year and recorded 30 births. On December 16, we commissioned Ken and Marti Helms to be Southern Baptist Convention missionaries to Spain. It has been a good year!

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1984, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Bill Angell, Professor of New Testament, Wake Forest University

Dr. James Carpenter, Medical Doctor, Seneca, SC

Dr. John Cheyne, Southern Baptist Convention Foreign Mission Board

Dr. Lawrence Childs, Missions Director, Mecklenburg Baptist Association

Rev. Stan Craig, Retired Baptist Minister & Church Member

Dr. Bill Crouch, Director of Development, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina

Mrs. Jan Crouch, Pastor's Wife

Rev. Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth

Dr. Glen Hinson, Professor, Wake Forest University

Dr. Clifton Jones, Pastor, Friendship Baptist Church
 Rev. Dennis Kirkley, Missionary to Indonesia
 Dr. James L. Maddex, Department of Visitation Ministry,
 Southern Baptist Convention
 Dr. Fred Moffatt, Pastor, Heritage Baptist, Annapolis, MD
 Mr. Fred Salley, Summer Youth Associate
 Dr. T. C. Smith, Professor, Davidson College and
 Southeastern Seminary
 Dr. William Tanner, President, Foreign Mission Board,
 Atlanta, GA

A seminar entitled *Skills for Calling and Caring Ministries* was held January 11-26, 1985. The popular title for the seminar was *Learning the Language of Healing*. The course was available to all persons in church leadership positions and was taught by the church ministerial staff.

Baptist Men's Day was observed on January 20 with guest speaker Dr. Tim Pennell, President of the Baptist Medical Relief Group composed of Baptist laymen who assisted in Southern Baptist Foreign Missions. Dr. Pennell was a physician by profession and an active Baptist layman. This was followed on January 22 by the Baptist Women's Associational Meeting, which focused on "Personal Witnessing" and was led by Annette Cowan from Hickory Grove Baptist Church.

In the January 21, 1985, ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch announced that: *For the first time in our history we gave over one million dollars for budgeted missions and ministries in 1984.* We have reached a new plateau for which we are grateful and feel responsibility to God.

At the January 27 vesper hour, there was an Ordination Service for David C. Cromer, son of Mr. and Mrs. B. C. Cromer and son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Paul D. Godfrey. Both families are still Providence members. David was a graduate of Western Carolina University and Southeastern Seminary (Master of Divinity Degree, 1984). In 1981, he was Providence's Summer Youth Associate and in December 1984 became Associate Pastor at Walnut Hills Baptist Church in Williamsburg, Virginia. Pastor Crouch preached the Ordination Sermon, entitled "A Chosen Instrument of Mine."

During the week of January 28, 1985, Patty McBrayer celebrated her sixth year as Organ/Music Associate.

In the February 4 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch reported on the just completed staff retreat held at Camp Caraway, along with six other Baptist churches from North and South Carolina: *The major thrust was a training session by Dr. Bill Clemmons of Southeastern Seminary on prayer and the development of the spiritual life.*

The week of February 10-16, 1985, was "Focus on WMU." The major topics of discussion and study were: Tasks of WMU, Teach Missions, Engage in Mission Action and Personal Witnessing, Support Missions, and Interpret and Undergird the Work of the Church and Denomination.

In the February 11, 1985 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced that the Korean Mission had moved temporarily to the Mecklenburg Baptist Association Office for worship, and they would be looking for a more permanent home. This move was necessary due to Providence's great need for space on Sundays; however, Providence would continue to maintain an interest in the Mission and help them financially for five years.

February 17-20, 1985, was the annual Winter Bible Conference which focused upon "A Study of Psalms," with Dr. John J. Owens as the teacher. Dr. Owens was a retired Professor of Old Testament Interpretation from Southern Seminary. His nickname was "Red Top," and he was known as a Hebrew scholar and master of many languages.

The annual Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 3-10, 1985. The Baptist Women led the church-wide emphasis on Home Missions with prayer sessions, study groups and two General Sessions led by Rev. Patty McBrayer and Janet Kirkley, a missionary to Indonesia and former Providence member. The Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission goal was \$30,000,000, and the Providence goal was \$9,999.99. For 1985, Providence was paired with the city of Chicago for Home Missions. As a part of this pairing, Dr. Everett Anthony, Executive Director of the Chicago Metro Association, presented a slide program about Baptist Home Mission efforts in the Chicago area at the vesper hour on March 3.

On March 17, 1985, Providence, through Pastor Crouch's position on the Board of Trustees at Wake Forest University, hosted

Dr. Thomas K. Hearn, Wake Forest's President. He spoke at the morning services and was treated to lunch at the Carmel Country Club. During 1984, Providence gave \$11,893 to Wake Forest and provided a \$3,000 scholarship for a ministerial student in honor of Pastor Crouch.

For its Easter concert, the Sanctuary Choir presented David Danner's "Joy in the Morning: Experiences of Sorrow Turned to Joy." Due to the concert's popularity, the choir gave two performances on March 31. They were accompanied by members of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Patty McBrayer on the organ and directed by Lowell Dotson.

In the March 25 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced that the Foreign Mission Board had requested that Providence and the Mecklenburg Baptist Association, as a part of the North Carolina Partnership in Togo, West Africa, take on the assignment of building a new chapel at the Baptist Seminary campus in Lome. The chapel was needed to train pastors and lay people for work in the churches. The project cost was estimated to be about \$50,000. At the time, Providence had \$575 in hand. As Pastor Crouch stated: *If you would like to help, mark your envelope 'Togo.' The seminary in Lome serves all of French speaking West Africa. So our challenge comes – let's go after it!*

At the April 21 vesper hour, the Providence Young Musicians Choir presented a musical drama entitled "Adam's Apple" by Daniel A. Smith. The concert was directed by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by Patty McBrayer on the organ. The Young Musicians gave a marvelous presentation.

The April 22, 1985, *InReach* carried a special congratulations to Providence member Angie Dickison. On April 16 at the annual meeting of the Mecklenburg WMU, Angie was installed as the new BYW Director for the Mecklenburg Association.

The growing tensions and power struggle in the Southern Baptist Convention brought two seminary presidents to Providence on April 25, 1985. Dr. Russell Dilday, President of Southern Seminary, and Dr. Randall Lolley, President of Southeastern Seminary, gave Providence members a first-hand report on the power struggle and its impact on the Baptist seminaries.

The Providence spring revival was held April 28-May 1, 1985, preceded by cottage prayer sessions, study groups and community visitation. The guest evangelist was Dr. Ralph Langley, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Huntsville, Alabama. Dr. Langley had been considered for the Providence pastorate prior to Pastor Crouch's coming.

The April 29, 1985, ***InReach*** announced that the Youth Summer Mission Trip would be July 17-31 to Neptune, New Jersey, a suburb of New York City. While serving as home missionaries, the youth would conduct Vacation Bible Schools, give concerts and attend Youth Congress '85 in Washington, DC. To help fund the trip, the youth sponsored a series of youth mission barbecues with the theme, "Make a Pig of Yourself."

Baptist Women's Day on May 7 began with a Coffee, small study groups and prayer sessions. The highlight was the Luncheon General Session, featuring Dr. Mia Topple of the Leper Clinic.

Sunday, May 19, 1985, was Homecoming at Providence. As Pastor Crouch stated in the May 13 ***InReach***:

We have a birthday on Sunday – our 31st as a church family. Surely God has blessed us in so many ways and we come to this celebration as one of only six Baptist churches in North Carolina with over 2,000 members. We are also among the leaders of our State Convention in mission gifts, evangelism and educational training. The open doors of opportunity are still before us and we have developed an exciting fellowship.

The highlight of the Homecoming was the appearance of Mark Blankenship, a gifted composer, arranger and church musician, who worked at the Southern Baptist Convention Church Music Department in Nashville, Tennessee. Mark had been commissioned by the church to write the 1985 anniversary anthem entitled "Live By Faith," which he played during the morning worship service.

The May 27, 1985, ***InReach*** announced two staff anniversaries. Wendell Sloan was celebrating his fourth year as church Business Manager, and Sarah Watson was completing two years as Receptionist/Secretary.

During the June 2, 1985 vesper hour, Martha Iley was ordained as a Minister of Church Music. Bryce and Martha and their children had been long-time members of Providence. Martha had served as

Providence's first Minister of Music and for many years had worked with church youth choirs. It was a very moving, spirit-filled service.

On June 9, 1985, George Hamilton, IV presented a concert entitled "An Evening with George." George, known as the International Ambassador of Country Music, was preparing to perform with the Billy Graham Crusade in a follow-up Mission England Crusade in Sheffield. It was a grand "foot-stomping" time for all. George and his family had been members of Providence for 12 years.

The June 3 *InReach* announced that Sandi Self, the Summer Associate Youth Minister, had arrived and was busy working with the youth. Sandi was a graduate of Gardner-Webb College and was currently a second year student at Southeastern Seminary. She had a varied background of youth experiences, including playing the guitar very well.

In the June 17, 1985 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch gave his summary of the just completed Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas:

The 1985 Convention is over and goes into the history books as the 'big blowout,' where Southern Baptists met in Dallas before the eyes of the world, and discovered that we have a 'monster by the tail'.....The cry of 'inerrancy' is a smoke screen, the real issue is power and control.

The entire Providence delegation gave a report to the church on June 23 at the vesper hour.

On June 24, the Long-Range Planning Committee announced that the architectural firm of Wilber Kendrick Workman and Warren had been hired to prepare drawings on the new Education-Activities Building to be located and attached to the church's north side. The new building would contain 30,000 square feet of usable space.

On June 24, 1985, Business Administrator Wendell Sloan announced that Mattie Lou Edwards had been added to the church staff as Food Service Director, and she would support all church programs with the Food Service Ministry. Mattie Lou had considerable experience in local church food service and had special training at Central Piedmont Community College.

During the July 7 vesper hour, Dr. Norma Stevens gave church members a seminar on *How To Have Super Families Without Being*

Super Parents. Dr. Stevens and her husband served with the Foreign Mission Board in Mexico from 1961-1974.

Pastor Crouch announced in the July 1, 1985, *InReach* that the Korean Mission had located a ten-acre site on Pence Road in the Hickory Grove area for a future building site. The Koreans would immediately start a building for the first unit of their church. If successful, they would become the first ethnic group in Charlotte and one of the first in North Carolina to become permanently located. As he stated: *What is our part? They are asking for \$25,000 over the next five years, \$5,000 this year and \$5,000 for the next four years. This is about what we have done for Carmel, Sharon and Candlewyck in other years.*

The July 1 *InReach* also carried two announcements. First, Lowell Dotson, Minister of Music, had just completed his sixteenth year at Providence. Second, the Mecklenburg Baptist Association would build a 14,000 square foot building at the intersection of Mint Street and Independence Boulevard at a cost of \$800,000, scheduled for completion around January 1986. The new facility would enhance Baptist witness in Charlotte.

In its quarterly business meeting on July 14, 1985, the church approved the Mission Committee recommendation that:

Providence Baptist Church enter into a 'sister church' relationship with Trinity Baptist Church of The Hague, Netherlands, for a three-year period beginning with the 1986 budget year. That we contribute \$2,400 per year for three years to help them maintain a pastor on the field. This will serve as a part of our involvement in the North Carolina Partnership with the European Baptist Convention. Rev. Steve Smith would go as their pastor in September 1985.

The church also approved the new Weekday Education Care Program Purpose and Statement of Philosophy:

Purpose: To provide Christian care and early education for the preschool child in our church family and our community.

Statement of Philosophy: To provide an atmosphere of love, acceptance, security and trust in a Christian environment and to promote a positive self-image for each child with a strong emphasis on moral and spiritual development.

The Weekday Education Program was supervised by Minister with Children Ed Landrus and Kindergarten Director Jeanette Stockdale.

The August 5, 1985, *InReach* announced that Providence member and Charlotte Police Counselor Rev. Dennis Whitaker had been elected President of the International Conference of Police Chaplains at the annual July session in Memphis. The ICPC had 50 members in 45 states and three countries. Pastor Crouch had been part of the charter group and served as International Secretary for several years.

In the August 7, 1985 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

Bonnie Adams joined our staff ten years ago as my secretary. She has become a real 'right arm' and makes my role a lot easier. She not only makes my appointments, types my sermons and correspondence, but helps me fulfill my task as Administrator. She helps by keeping up with the membership, the official records, the history, the work of the committees, the sick, weddings and funerals.....So, on her tenth anniversary, August 1, the Personnel Committee has approved the Pastor's recommendation, and has promoted Bonnie to the rank of Administrative Assistant.

Sunday, August 18, 1985, was "Get To Know Our Neighbors Day." During the morning services, Rev. Steve Smith, the new Pastor to Trinity Baptist Church in The Hague, was the guest speaker. During the vesper hour, Dr. Larry Wilkinson, Pastor of Providence United Methodist Church, was the speaker.

On August 25, the Building Committee presented the architectural drawings for the new Activities Building and other renovation improvements. The new addition would be attached to the north end of the present building and provide educational space for youth and young adults and activities for all ages. The plan also called for renovating the present Youth Building into a small chapel and adult educational space. As Pastor Crouch stated: *This means the original building will return to a place of worship. Additional parking and recreational facilities will complete the campus complex. This should provide us with the necessary space for growth for the next ten years.*

September 1, 1985, marked three anniversaries. Ed Landrus completed his ninth anniversary as Minister with Children; Lee McDonald completed his fourth anniversary as Associate Pastor, and Tommy Hall completed his second anniversary as Minister with Youth.

September 1985 began with Adult Training Seminars: *Leadership Class* (Pastor Crouch), *Worship and the Christian Tradition* (Lowell Dotson), *Teachings of the Early Church* (Gerry Cofer), *The Bible and Who We Are* (Connie McDonald), *Issues of Grace and the Doctrine of Christ* (Cam Wallace), and *Ongoing Bible Study* (Rod Coward). There was also a special Sunday evening seminar entitled *Family Life Enrichment*, taught by Tom O'Neal.

During September, the focus was upon the North Carolina State Mission Campaign for Baptist Institutions and other programs. The 1985 theme was "Hope Is Something You Give." The State goal was \$2,800,000 with the Providence goal being \$4,330.

The September 16, 1985, *InReach* announced the resignation of Rev. Ed Landrus, Minister with Children. As Pastor Crouch stated: *Ed has been a partner in our ministry for nine years, and I will miss him on our team.....We are grateful for Ed's tenure of service and wish him the best for the future.*

September was budget preparation, discussion and approval time. The church in called conference on September 22 approved the \$1,216,000 budget for 1986. The 1985 budget of \$1,188,000 had been easily subscribed. Victory Sunday for pledging the new budget was October 27, 1985.

October 1, 1985, marked Henry Crouch's seventeenth anniversary as pastor. As he stated in the September 30 *InReach*:

It has been a busy year, and probably one of our most productive years.....This week we begin a new church year with optimism and excitement. We close 1984-85 with a resident membership of 1,963 and a grand total of 2,272, including 106 in our Korean Mission. We had 71 by baptism last year out of the 206 new members. Let me pledge you my best efforts as we seek to make 1985-86 a better year.

At the October 13 quarterly business meeting, the church approved the following:

- 1.Appointed the Pastor and Tom Baker for volunteer mission service in Togo, West Africa, from November 1-10, 1985.
- 2.Appointed George and Mary Ann Crouch for volunteer mission work in Togo for a month in 1986.
- 3.Appointed Frank and Betty Gilreath for volunteer mission work in Europe during 1986.
- 4.Approved Providence's participation in a Togo, North Carolina Project to build a chapel/lecture hall on the campus of the West Africa Theological Seminary in Lome, Togo. The \$50,000 cost would come from churches and individuals in Mecklenburg County.

On Tuesday evening, October 15, 1985, the WMU had a special program entitled "Come Hear A Rainbow Banquet." The guest speaker was Wilda Fincher, wife, mother and author, who had written many articles for Southern Baptist Convention publications, as well as several inspirational books. For the occasion, she wrote the following poem:

LORD, IT ISN'T EASY

Missions is scattered all
around us
but it is easier to pray
and give
than it is to live
to love
to help
help us to let You fill us
with love
empty vessels never run over.

On Sunday evening, October 20, 1985, the vesper hour was moved to Ovens Auditorium, as a part of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association's "A Century of Heritage and Hope Celebration." The Association began as a minority group in a Presbyterian stronghold and had, by 1985, become the largest religious denomination in Mecklenburg County, with 83 churches and five missions with 48,668 members. Several Providence members led in the celebration activities: Patty McBrayer, Lowell Dotson and Sarah Watson.

George Hamilton, IV was the Master of Ceremonies for the Sunday evening service.

Monday, October 28, 1985, was an exciting day at Providence. The Pastor and Tom Baker left for Amsterdam and Togo, West Africa. At The Hague they visited with Rev. Steve Smith and his family in Providence's sister church, Trinity Baptist. Next, they were off to the North Carolina Project in Moretan, Togo, where a concert was presented by the Singing Churchmen and Singing Women of North Carolina. The group was composed of over 100 singers from across the state, who were ministers of music, organists and musical staff personnel. It was a marvelous evening.

A Doctrinal Study of Christ Seminar was held November 3-17, 1985, with guest teacher Dr. Welton Seal, Associate Pastor at St. John's Baptist Church. He was an Instructor in Biblical Studies, Department of Religion at Baylor University before going to St. John's in 1983.

On Sunday, November 17, 1985, the architectural firm of Wilber Kendrick Workman and Warren presented the completed plans for the Educational and Activity Center Project for discussion and approval. As Pastor Crouch stated in the November 11

InReach:

We will vote on the plans for the new building and for site improvements. We will also request authorization for a Capital Funds Drive. It will be an important discussion about our future as a church in Charlotte.....The emphasis this time is youth and adult educational space, along with activities facilities. Improvements in the kitchen area, new parking and, finally, the renovation of the first building into a lovely new chapel for funerals and weddings will complete the proposal.

The congregation gave a resounding "yes" to the building project proposal.

During the week of November 24, 1985, Providence began to prepare for the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions. The Southern Baptist Convention Offering goal was \$70,000,000, and the Providence goal was \$29,000. The guest speaker during the morning services was Dr. Bill O'Brien, Vice President of the Foreign Mission Board. Prior to that job, he served on the Foreign

Mission Field in Indonesia for 12 years. During the vesper hour, Pastor Crouch and Tom Baker reported on their trip to Togo, West Africa, and the North Carolina Project in Moretan.

The annual Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 27 at Trinity Presbyterian. Participating churches were: Trinity Presbyterian, Providence United Methodist, St. Gabriel Catholic and Providence Baptist. Pastor Crouch delivered the Thanksgiving Sermon.

On December 1, 1985, during the vesper hour, the Music Ministry presented a concert entitled "An Advent Recital of Seasonal Music For Organ, Piano and Voice," featuring Lowell Dotson and Patty McBrayer. On December 8, "A Service of Christmas Music" featured the Providence Youth Choirs led by Patty McBrayer, culminating with the annual Candlelight Service. The final music concert of the year on December 18 was the Christmas at Providence Service entitled "The Perfect Gift," featuring the Young Musicians Choir, directed by Patty McBrayer.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1985, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Dr. Albert Ambrose, Pastor, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Cherry Hill, New Jersey

Dr. Everett Anthony, Executive Dir., Chicago Metro Assn.

Dr. Bill Crouch, Director of Development, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina

Dr. Perry Crouch, Former Executive Secretary, Baptist State Convention

Bishop John Donoghue, Roman Catholic Bishop for Western North Carolina

Rev. Norman Flowers, Pastor, Horison Baptist Church of Roodepoort, South Africa

Dr. Harry Gamble, Retired Pastor, Calvary Baptist, Roanoke

Rev. Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth

Dr. Thomas K. Hearn, President, Wake Forest University

Rev. Ed Landrus, Minister with Children

Dr. Ralph Langley, Pastor, First Baptist, Huntsville, AL

Dr. William O'Brien, Vice President, Foreign Mission Board

Dr. John Owens, Retired Professor of Old Testament,
Southern Seminary

Dr. Tim Pennell, Baptist Layman and President of Baptist
Medical Relief Group

Dr. Welton Seal, Associate Pastor, St. John's Baptist Church

Rabbi Robert Seigel, Temple Beth Shalom of Charlotte

Rev. Steve Smith, Pastor, Trinity Baptist Church, The
Hague

Rev. Keithen Tucker, Lexington Avenue Baptist, High Point

Dr. Larry Wilkinson, Pastor, Providence United Methodist

Rev. Dennis Whitaker, Charlotte Police Ministry Chaplain

Pastor Crouch summarized 1985 at Providence in the January
6, 1986, **InReach**:

The curtain falls on a very busy year. God has given us many evidences of His blessings and opened doors for our response as a servant church. We had our largest membership 2,205, with 2,000 resident, 205 non-resident, 115 Korean and a host of new folks who have added their talents to our fellowship. I dream that we will accomplish two projects in 1986. First, complete the Chapel Building on the campus of the Seminary in Lome, Togo, as a part of the North Carolina Project. Second, is to build a Habitat for Humanity home, with a cost of about \$25,000.

The January 6 **InReach** also announced it would begin a weekly column about the Building Fund, which needed to raise a minimum of \$2,000,000 to pay for the December 1985 approved building plan. As the Editor stated:

Our church is courageously facing the most challenging experience in her existence. We have gone this way several times before – in 1967 (goal was \$450,000), and again in 1972 (when we were reaching for \$500,000). However, we have the faith to believe that, with the Lord's help, we can reach new heights of achievement.

The January 13, 1986, **InReach** announced that the weekly column would be called "Reach Fund News" and the co-chairs would be Earl Pope and Sam Rutland. The campaign would begin on April 6, 1986, and run for 50 months.

From January 22-February 26, Providence offered a series of

Church Training Seminars: *Personal Evangelism, Contemporary Prophetic Voices, The Early Church, Continuing Bible Study and Prayer and Spiritual Awakening.*

In the January 27, 1986 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated that Providence had hosted the Hunger and Peace Seminar for the Christian Life Commission (SBC) during the week of January 21 and that it had *opened to him many new dimensions of sensitivity, and that Christians needed to respond with a sensitivity that we are God's people on mission.*

The youth revival was February 7-9, 1986, with guest speaker Nick Foster from Louisville, Kentucky, and guest musician Mike Pittman from Charlotte. This was followed on February 16-19 by the annual February Bible Study with guest teacher Dr. Ralph Wood, Assistant Professor of Religion at Wake Forest, who taught the book of Hebrews.

March 1986 was a busy month. Youth Week was March 9-16 with the theme, "Run For The Reason." The week's highlight was a Youth/Parent-A-Thon, which culminated in a concert featuring Jim and Kim Thomas. This was followed by the March Home Mission Emphasis with the theme, "How Far Love Reaches." The focus was upon Providence's program of ministry to people in America. As Pastor Crouch stated in the March 3 *InReach*:

The world is at our doorstep and needs the gospel of love – along with the poor, needy, homeless, and those without Christ. The goal for our Southwide effort is \$33,500,000 which supplies about one-half of the Home Mission budget for 1986. Our church goal is \$11,000 for the month of March, in addition to raising money for the new building. Be generous in your response to this Easter offering and we will show LOVE DOES REACH OUT TO OTHERS.

The March 3 *InReach* also announced that George and Mary Ann Crouch were in Togo, Africa, and would be there during March 1986 as volunteers in the North Carolina Project.

Two special events also took place in March 1986. First, on March 10, the Baptist Young Women welcomed Cindy Martin who shared her experiences as an English teacher for two years in Hong Kong. Second, March 16 was Mental Retardation Sunday. For the services, Pastor Crouch's sermon was entitled "The Service of the

Church.” Following the 11:00 am service, a reception was held in the new Special Education Department.

The annual spring revival was held March 23-26, 1986, with the theme, “Good News America, God Loves You.” The guest revivalist was Dr. Charles Carter, Pastor of the Shades Mountain Baptist Church of Birmingham, Alabama.

Sunday night, March 30, 1986, was the Reach Fund Victory Celebration which was held in three parts: the buffet dinner, the Victory Rally, and the Commemorative Lord’s Supper, held in the sanctuary as a renewal of the church’s dedication to the Lord. Co-chairs Earl Pope and Sam Rutland announced that \$2,000,000 in pledges had been secured.

On April 6, the Music Ministry presented a spring concert entitled “A Service of Praise and Celebration.” The concert featured solos, duets and the 85-member Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by the Charlotte Symphony Brass, directed by Lowell Dotson and accompanied by Patty McBrayer on the organ.

April 1986 featured several meetings: On April 10, the Friendship Club met with guest Karla Sneegas. The Weekday Kindergarten Parent Night was April 17 with guest speaker Anda Cochran, Coordinator, Early Education Program with the Mecklenburg Mental Health Service. On April 18, the Better Homes Club met with Dr. Bill Crouch, Director of Development at Baptist Children’s Home, speaking on “Making It Happen For You.”

At the April 13 quarterly business meeting, the congregation approved building a Habitat for Humanity House by April 18, Providence’s 32nd Anniversary. The Missions Committee, chaired by Christine Beaman, recommended raising \$25,000 and 1,200 hours of labor for the actual building of the home.

At the request of the Nicaraguan Baptist Convention, the church approved sending Associate Pastor Lee McDonald as a mission volunteer to Nicaragua for two weeks in May-June 1986. While in Nicaragua, he would assist Baptist congregations and clinics.

In a special called business meeting on April 27, 1986, the congregation was asked to approve a motion of the Building Committee to spend up to \$1,800,000 to enter a contract with the

Evco Construction Company for the construction of the Educational Building and Activity Building, additional parking spaces, soccer field, outside running track, picnic area and baseball field and to purchase equipment and furnishings for the new Educational Building, soccer field and baseball field. As Pastor Crouch stated in the April 28 **InReach**:

The ground-breaking will be held on May 4.....The building will offer a tremendous opportunity for ministry. All ages will benefit from its presence. It will give us a more complete campus for our people to work, serve and minister. Hopefully, completion will be at the beginning of 1987.

I have been present for two ground-breaking events and this third one will be historical also. We will gather at the site immediately after the 11:00 am worship service to officially dedicate the venture and turn the first spades of dirt. Another permanent part of our building will be on its way and the surrounding community will take note of our expansion. Our physical plant will be one of the best in the country and is a real tribute to a young church that has been very involved in missions.

Providence celebrated its 32nd Anniversary on Sunday, May 18, 1986. As Pastor Crouch stated in the May 12 **InReach**:

Providence is officially 32 years old and we are 'coming of age' in our denomination and in our community. God has blessed us in so many ways! His Presence has been felt in the lives of our young people as they have responded to His call for service and leadership.

The guest speaker for Homecoming was Dr. Roy Smith, General Secretary/Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

The May 26, 1986, **InReach** carried two announcements. First, the Summer Youth Associate, Ricky Cates, would arrive on May 30. Minister with Youth Tommy Hall stated: *Ricky is from Greensboro and has just graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill. I am excited about the contributions he is going to make to the youth ministry of Providence this summer.* Second, a report from Associate Pastor Lee McDonald stated: *As you read this article, I*

will be east of Managua, Nicaragua, with other brothers and sisters in Christ seeking to bear witness to the peace and life that Jesus brings when we allow Him to reign as Lord.

On Sunday, June 8, 1986, Pastor Crouch left for the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta with reservations.

My major concerns deal with the future of our Baptist denomination and our methodology of cooperation. We have been taken over by a group of ultra conservatives who have not supported the Convention with their gifts, and who insist upon a creedal approach to our life as a people.....Our denomination is taking on a new look with new sounds that greatly concern me.

The June 9, 1986, **InReach** carried congratulations for Providence members Cleo Gullick and Joe Fesperman. Cleo had served as a teacher and principal for 24 years, the last six at First Ward Elementary School. Joe was retiring as President of Shamrock Leasing Company.

In the June 16 **InReach** Pastor Crouch gave his summary of the Atlanta Southern Baptist Convention.

The conservatives now control our Convention at the national level and indicate they plan to take over the State Convention also.....Fortunately, the results of the Convention are not binding on us at Providence. We are free to be ourselves. Openness toward all, with a diverse family, can still characterize our membership. Contrary to opinions expressed by outsiders – our theology is extremely conservative. Our concern is evangelical, our warmth beckons to the uncommitted, and our gifts continue to climb in support of the Convention's Cooperative Program, regardless of who is in control. We seek the truth with an open Bible and, under God's spirit, allow each Baptist the freedom of interpretation.

By mid-June 1986, \$25,000 had been raised for Providence's first Habitat House. Several church work crews were well underway with the house construction labor commitment for 1,200 hours. Those not able to work prayed for the success of the project.

Dorothea Compton, chair of the Missions Committee, in the June 30 **InReach** asked church members to assist David and Naomi

Coward, missionaries to Indonesia, with their transportation problem. They needed a motorbike costing about \$1,200 to get to and from their language learning program. She also asked the congregation to contribute to the church World Hunger Fund.

During the July 6, 1986 vesper hour, Debbie Crouch McKeithan spoke about her work for the disabled. Debbie, who had been seriously ill for many years, was working for “Independence” – independence for the disabled community – focusing on the needs of women with disabilities. She showed tapes of her recent appearances on national television, as well as H.O.W.’s promotional films being used around the country.

In the June 30 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated: *We salute our Minister of Music, Lowell Dotson, who will celebrate his seventeenth anniversary on July 1. The Dotson family came to us from the seminary after the completion of his Master’s Degree. He has built our magnificent music program. We are proud of the family and his accomplishments as our Minister of Music.*

In his July 7, 1986 *InReach* column entitled “Where Have We Failed,” Pastor Crouch lamented:

The passing of Church Training in our churches on Sunday evening has left a vacuum in our educational program in the average church. It was in these sessions that we became acquainted with Baptist history, doctrines, principles and issues that confront us as a denomination. We have a generation, as young adults, who do not know their heritage and this added to the hosts who have come from other religious backgrounds, how can we recover? The church must play a significant role by providing ways for the members to secure this important information.

At the July 13 quarterly business meeting, the congregation approved a volunteer mission trip for George and Mary Ann Crouch to Togo, Africa, for two months in 1987.

During the July 20 vesper hour, the church was treated to a summary of the just completed Youth Mission Trip to Asbury, New Jersey, where the youth taught Vacation Bible Schools, made repairs and gave concerts. Nineteen youth and five adults made the trip, led by Minister with Youth Tommy Hall. Lowell and Sallie Dotson and Cam and Debra Wallace also participated.

The July 21, 1986, *InReach* announced the hiring of Ethel Carr as Director of Preschool Weekday Programs, effective August 1. Prior to coming to Providence, Ethel had served as Director of the Child Development Center of Central United Methodist Church in Monroe for 17 years and had an outstanding background in the educational and daycare field. She would administer all three of Providence's Preschool Weekday Programs: Weekday Kindergarten, Mother's Day Out and the new Day Care Program.

During the July 27, 1986 vesper hour, the guest speaker was Rev. David Glover, who had recently been appointed by the Home Mission Board to a two-year term as a church planter in Charlotte. His mission was to start a church on the busy east side of Charlotte, and he shared with the congregation his mission assignment efforts.

Ricky Cates, the Summer Youth Associate, delivered the sermon at the July 10 vesper hour. As Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth, stated in the August 4 *InReach*: *Ricky Cates has given 110% to the youth of Providence. We love him dearly. To show our appreciation, we will have a great time of fellowship with him following the vesper hour.*

Pastor Crouch, although vacationing at Lake Lure, announced in the August 11 *InReach* that:

For us to reach out to our community, a new Associate in Outreach (Evangelism and Visitation) will be requested for 1987. He will also have program assignments with the Singles in our city and offer leadership with this growing group in Charlotte. We also want to add Bill Andrews (our SBC missionary to Chile) as a part-time Associate with Senior Adults. Bill is retiring from the Foreign Mission Board and will be available to us by July 1, 1987. Both will give the Pastor some relief in the preaching part of our ministry.

During the August 24 vesper hour, Associate Pastor Lee McDonald shared his Nicaragua mission trip with the topic, "Nicaragua: So That We Might Have Tomorrow." His message to the congregation was *to allow God to confront us in the challenging opportunities set before us.*

At the August 31 vesper hour, the Music Ministry presented a concert entitled "A Service of Sacred Music," featuring Lowell

Dotson with Patty McBrayer on the piano. A church-wide ice cream fellowship followed the concert, with a good time by all.

September 2, 1986, was Baptist Women's Day with a Coffee, prayer sessions, small group study sessions, culminating with a General Session. The guest speaker was Dr. Harold Webb, Director of Language Ministries, Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

Next came the Seven Fall Church Training Seminars: *The Bible, Alive Today!* (Pastor Crouch), *The Hurried Child* (Connie McDonald), *Israel's Great Patriarchs* (Gerry Cofer), *The Biblical Basis of Missions* (Rev. Steve Ayers), *Life* (Rev. Lee McDonald), *Through The Bible In One Year* (Rod Coward), and *Early Childhood Education* (Carol Gestwicki of Central Piedmont Community College).

In order to raise funds for their 1987 Youth Mission Trip, the youth held Slave Day on September 20, 1986, and did odd jobs for church members. They also had a paper drive. These two functions were in addition to the annual Barbecue used to raise their mission funds.

The September 29, 1986, ***InReach*** announced that Harry Brown had been installed as Deacon Emeritus, the eighth active Deacon Emeritus. He had served as an active deacon for 15 years, the longest term of service for any deacon. The other active Deacons Emeritus were: Andy Borders, Doug Broadway, Harry Bacon, Al Edwards, Chip Kissiah, Ramon Sudderth and Al Welling, Sr.

As Providence ended the 1985-86 church year, Pastor Crouch, in the September 29 ***InReach***, gave a summary of the year:

It has been a busy year with the decision to expand our facilities, the campaign to raise two million dollars, and the actual awarding of contracts with the building coming up out of the ground as we close this church year. Every Sunday we have new additions and our membership is at an all-time high of 2,384 (including 122 Koreans). We are diverse in nature and yet a oneness of spirit exists in our midst. We have built a house for Habitat for Humanity as well as contributing to our regular mission outreaches through the denomination. We have large numbers who are involved daily with our programs and ministries. Providence is a busy place, our campus is full of people, our parking lots full seven

days a week. Weddings have united 23 couples this year and we have lost 7 by death. Our Korean Mission is growing and they have purchased 10 acres of land for a new church home. We baptized 53 last year and the Koreans 16, for a total of 69. We had a grand total of 218 (16 Korean) new members this past year and a net gain of 113.....Sunday is the beginning of a new church year. It is the Anniversary Sunday for the Crouches as we begin our nineteenth year. Come help us get it off to a good start!

The October 6 ***InReach*** headline was "Church Approves 1987 Budget of \$1,398,000!" It stated that Stewardship Emphasis Chairs Ron and Paula Withrow had enlisted nine area Colonels to assist in preparation for Pledge Sunday on October 16: Wylie Berry, Carl Brooks, Bill Caldwell, Ed Chapman, Ken Fisher, Don Motsinger, Sam Rutland, Charles Still and Jerry Crosby. The 1987 campaign theme was "Action '87: Jesus Loved The Church So Much That He Gave His Life For It."

Providence lost one of its leading founders on October 3, 1986, when Edward R. Echerd, Jr. passed away. Ed was a charter member and worked through the Mecklenburg Baptist Association to help start several Baptist churches in the county. He would be greatly missed by all Baptists.

In the October 6, 1986 ***InReach***, Minister of Music Lowell Dotson made an appeal for church members to join the varied church choirs and also to send him comments about the worship service music as an aid in helping with future worship services. As he stated: *From the Preludes to the Benediction, we want to help discover God and your relationship with Him. We want our music to lead us toward Him and to help us grow in our insights of and responses to our Creator.*

The Better Homes Club met on October 17 for the purpose of good fellowship and getting to know one another. "Day Star," a Rock Hill music group, provided a program of musical arrangements with testimony and insight into how this group of four couples met and formed their families and "Day Star."

On October 23, Women and Men United for Missions held a church-wide banquet with guest speaker Ken Sehested, Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship.

The October 20, 1986, *InReach* announced that Sue Deaton had accepted the church's call to become Minister with Children, effective November 16. However, research failed to find that she had visited the church or that a church called conference had approved the call. A letter from her dated October 29, 1986, from the First Baptist Church of Rome, Georgia, stated:

During the past several weeks, you and I have experienced God's leadership and have seen His hand in bringing us together in His service. On October 12, your church voted to call me to serve as your Minister with Children. After a time of prayer in seeking God's will, I accepted and now look forward to the days that are to come.

During the October 26 vesper hour, Providence hosted the annual Metropolitan Music Ministries Concert. The service music was provided by three choirs from Mt. Carmel Baptist Church and guest instrumentalists. Providence member Dr. Martha Iley was President of the Metropolitan Music Ministries.

Sunday, October 27, was Pledge Day for the 1987 budget. Co-chairs Ron and Paula Withrow reported that pledges of \$1,245,262 had been received, leaving \$152,738 to reach the goal. The work continued!

In the October 27 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

November will be another important month for us at Providence. We will determine what we want in our Chapel and complete the plans for the balance of our building program. We will also extend a call to a new Minister of Activities which will give us an additional minister in 1987. We will welcome Sue Deaton as our new Minister with Children on November 16.

The November 3 *InReach* announced that there would be three Church Training Seminars on November 5, 12 and 19: *The Rise of the Monarchy* (Gerry Cofer), *Parenting by Grace* (Lee McDonald), and *Ongoing Bible Study* (Rod Coward and Rick Edwards).

The November 17, 1986, *InReach* carried congratulations to the following Providence members: Betty Gilreath was reelected Second Vice President of the North Carolina State Baptist Convention meeting in Greensboro on November 10. Three other members were elected to Boards for a three-year term: John Bethea

(Gardner-Webb College), Earl Pope (Meredith College), and Lee Royal (Campbell University).

The annual Foreign Mission Study Course on *A Measure of Success* by Robert M. Damon was taught on November 23. The book was a profile of one successful missionary couple and a look at some of their remarkable missionary colleagues.

Providence members were also invited on November 23 to the Dedication Service of the Habitat House built by the church. A special thanks was extended to Aubrey Arant and Tom O'Neal who headed the Habitat effort.

In called conference on November 23, the church called Rev. Bobby Butler as Providence's first Minister of Activities. Bobby grew up in Alabama as the son of a Baptist minister and graduated from Samford University (B.S.) and Southern Seminary (Master of Religious Education). His staff assignment was to work with the entire church membership in the area of activities, fellowship and recreation. In addition, he would supervise the new building and the outside facilities and work with all ages. He would also train volunteers, coaches, group leaders and special interest clubs.

In a letter dated November 24, 1986, Rev. Butler stated:

The Activities Ministry is one of ministering to all age groups, preschoolers through senior adults. The ministry is one of sharing Jesus Christ, Christian fellowship, outreach, service and growth. You are building an excellent facility that will enable the church to offer a wide variety of programs that will add to the other ministries already provided by your fine church.....I will come to Charlotte with a strong desire to serve the Lord, to be in His will, and to be used as His minister.

In the November 24, 1986 **InReach**, Minister with Children Sue Deaton stated:

It is good to be with you and exciting as we anticipate the days to come. Thank you for your many expressions of support and affirmation.....The Children's Minister has many areas. I will continue to depend upon Sara Ponder, Ethel Carr, and Debbie Miller as my support staff. They have done an excellent job during the interim period. I appreciate them!

The annual Community Thanksgiving Service was held on

November 26 at St. Gabriel Catholic Church with Father Thomas Walsh giving the Thanksgiving Sermon. Pastor Crouch was on the program, and a large number of Providence members attended.

The annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held November 30-December 7, 1986, with the theme, "We Must Make Christ Known." The Southern Baptist Convention National Goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering was \$75,000,000, and the Providence goal was \$35,000. Dr. Harlan Spurgeon, Vice-President of Human Resources for the Foreign Mission Board, was the guest speaker. The first \$20,000 of Providence's Lottie Moon Offering would go to help complete the North Carolina Project in Togo, Africa. George and Mary Ann Crouch worked there for two weeks in 1986 and would be returning for two months in 1987. Pastor Crouch and Tom Baker had also made two visits to the project.

On December 1, 1986, Minister of Music Lowell Dotson laid out the Music Ministry program for the Christmas season:

I hope you enjoy this festive time of year. We have prepared a beautiful Christmas presentation for you on the December 21 Candlelight Service Program. We will feature our superb Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra in a work called "Images of Christmas." Beginning December 7, our evening service will feature a variety of musical programs for you to enjoy. First, December 7 is our Advent Concert, featuring our Adult Handbells, Youth Handbells, and Patty McBrayer playing on the organ some new Christmas organ works. Second, December 14 will be our Graded Choir Christmas Concert. All choirs from ages 4 through Senior Highs will be singing for this service. Third, December 21 is the annual Sanctuary Choir Christmas Music Presentation. We will also have our Candlelighting Service on this night.

In the December 22, 1986 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch announced:

We have some human resources at work, as volunteers, in our mission program for the coming year. Dr. Carlton Miller will be going to Bangalore, India, for a month as a receptor before he begins his residency. Dr. John Crawford is going to a hospital in Kenya for the same period. The Frank Gilreaths are headed to El Salvador; Derma Lambert and the George Crouches to Togo, Africa. Isn't it

exciting to have such experiences happening to people from Providence?

We want to offer congratulations to Gary Kaufman who received his Doctor of Ministry Degree from Southeastern Seminary in December, and to Al Ledford who received his Master of Divinity from Southern Seminary. These two will make significant contributions to our Baptist causes in the future. God has really blessed our young church with so many special people!

Rev. Al Ledford was the guest speaker for the December 28, 1986 morning services. Al, the son of Bill and Pat Ledford, grew up at Providence and was very active in the youth program and all areas of church life. He would start work on his doctorate in 1987.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1986, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Steve Ayers, Pastor, McGill Avenue Baptist, Concord
 Dr. Michael C. Blackwell, President, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina
 Dr. Charles Carter, Pastor, Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama
 Mr. Rick Cates, Summer Youth Associate
 Mr. Norman Cavender, Guest Speaker from 1986 Southern Baptist Convention Forum in Atlanta
 Dr. Lawrence Childs, Executive Director, Mecklenburg Baptist Association
 Dr. Paul R. Corts, President, Wingate College
 Rev. Nick Foster, Youth Revivalist, Louisville, Kentucky
 Rev. David Glover, Home Mission Board Church Starter
 Rev. Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth
 Dr. Martha Iley, President, Metropolitan Music Ministries
 Dr. Allen Laymon, Retired Baptist Minister, Wilmington
 Rev. Al Ledford, Providence Ministerial Student
 Dr. Emmanuel McCall, Retired Baptist Pastor & Missionary
 Rev. Lee McDonald, Associate Pastor
 Ms. Deborah McKeithan, President and Director, Handicapped Organization for Women
 Dr. R. Gene Puckett, Editor, *The Biblical Recorder*

Dr. Roy Smith, General Secretary/Treasurer, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Dr. Harlan Spurgeon, Vice-President, Foreign Mission Board

Dr. Ralph Wood, Professor of New Testament, Wake Forest University

Pastor Crouch stated in the January 5, 1987 ***InReach***:

We begin 1987 with a full staff, including a new Minister of Activities, Bobby Butler, and part-time workers with Singles and Senior Adults. Our new facilities will provide space for growth and an expansion of program possibilities. The new Chapel has been enhanced by a gift of two paintings (one an oil painting of Jesus and the other an original charcoal of 'The Departure' by Jeffrey Mills). It will also house an oil painting of Rev. Gordon Weekley, our first pastor.

In the January 19, 1987 ***InReach***, Associate Pastor Lee McDonald stressed the importance of Bible Study: *You will be hearing more about four areas of need if Bible Study is to be a top priority at Providence in 1987-88. These areas are: Space, Leadership, Curriculum and Organization.*

In the January 26 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch stated:

Singles have long been slighted. However, our new Minister of Activities has accepted the assignment to coordinate this ministry. Rev. Fred Salley has agreed to serve as a part-time helper in this area. Fred was a Summer Associate at Providence several years ago. He will be teaching one of the Singles Sunday School classes and will have activities and fellowships on a regular basis.....We are excited about this new venture with Singles at Providence!

On February 1, 1987, a reception for the Butler family was held following the vesper hour.

On February 3, Baptist Women's Day began with a Coffee, small group meetings, prayer sessions and culminated in a General Session with guest speaker Connie Andrews. Connie and her husband, Bill, had just retired after serving more than 30 years as missionaries to Chile.

WMU Focus Week was held February 8-14, 1987, with the theme, "You Can Open the Door to Missions." As WMU Director Debra Wallace stated in the February 2 ***InReach***:

WMU is a missions educator. It helps the church fulfill its mission; it promotes and supports missions; and it does mission action and personal witnessing. This year we want to thank our pastor and church staff for helping us to carry out our tasks. For without their support, we in the WMU could not perform our tasks of teaching missions, supporting missions through praying, giving, and going; engaging in mission action and personal witnessing; and interpreting and undergirding the work of the church and denomination.

The Winter Bible Study Course was held February 15-18. The guest teacher was Dr. Charles Talbert, Professor of New Testament at Wake Forest University, who taught the book of James.

In the February 9, 1987 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch announced the formation of the Southern Baptist Alliance:

It is a new organization designed to serve as a fellowship group for Southern Baptists who need a kindred tie. The emphasis is on principles, rather than politics within our denomination. Representatives from 12 states have been involved with the creation of the Alliance. Its temporary home will be in Charlotte. The first national Convocation will be held May 14-15 at Meredith College.

Pastor Crouch would serve as the first leader of the Alliance and speak as an individual, not as the leader of Providence Baptist Church. The Alliance's organization was a response of moderates to the takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention by Conservative elements.

The February 9, 1987, ***InReach*** carried the announcement that Lowell Dotson, Minister of Music for almost 18 years, had submitted his resignation. The Personnel Committee and the Pastor accepted the resignation with deep regrets. Lowell cited *personal reasons that have brought stress* and a decision to change vocational emphasis as his reasons. Lowell came to Providence on July 1, 1969, straight from Southern Seminary and developed a great music program. When he arrived, Providence was sparsely equipped, and the music program was very limited. He left behind a great legacy that included a complete Music Department, with 12 choirs and a magnificent Schantz organ.

In called conference on February 22, 1987, the church approved two recommendations. First was an Adult Mission Trip to the Netherlands. The Trinity Baptist Church of the Netherlands, pastored by Rev. Steve Smith, requested about ten volunteers to help with training, craft classes and some painting and repair work. Mary Ann Crouch coordinated the volunteer project. Second was endorsement of the following resolution:

We, the people of Providence Baptist Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, meeting in a special called business meeting on February 22, 1987, have joined with the North Carolina Baptist State Convention in session on November 10-12, 1986. The North Carolina Baptist State Convention adopted a resolution respectfully requesting that the Trustees of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board reconsider its position about financial support of women in ministry through the Home Mission Board.

We, as a congregation, affirm the role of women in furthering the Kingdom of Christ here on earth.

By affirming the action of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, we add our support for the request that the Trustees of the Home Mission Board reconsider support for women in their role as ministers of the gospel.

Pastor Crouch's column in the February 22, 1987, **InReach** was entitled: "The Aftermath!"

Last week was full of the media, press conferences and phone calls with reactions to the announcement of the Alliance. Our best laid plans for this to be non-political and for it to be non-threatening backfired as secular press played on the possibility of a break-up of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Our purpose, as stated in the news releases, is to be a fellowship of individuals and churches within the Convention interested in preserving historic Baptist principles and the continuance of our ministry and mission as a denomination. It was simply lost in the shuffle by outside sources to pronounce the doom of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Thanks for your words of encouragement, patience and understanding. I apologize for your getting caught off-

guard and for assuming on our long-term relationship. It's not easy to have a conscience with strong convictions and sit idly by when a denomination you have deeply loved is literally torn apart. There is surely light at the end of the tunnel and God will lead us into a better tomorrow.

At this point, Pastor Crouch did not realize the impact of his active participation in the Southern Baptist Convention controversy and the beginning of the Alliance. This became a major factor in his eventual resignation as Providence's Senior Minister.

Providence held a Home Missions Study Course on February 25 with the theme, "All Are Called To Evangelism," led by Connie McDonald.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was held March 1-8, 1987, with the theme, "Who Will Win America?" The week was filled with prayer sessions and study groups led by: Debra Motsinger, Sarah Smith, Carolyn Motsinger, Debbie Daniels and Lillian Welling. The Providence goal for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering was \$12,500.

During the March 7 vesper hour, the Music Ministry hosted a concert by the Carson-Newman College A Cappella Choir, directed by Dr. Eric Thorson. The 45-voice choir was well-known throughout the southeast and had a reputation of excellence in performance. They were performing in five states as a part of their ten-day spring tour and gave a beautiful concert.

In the March 9, 1987 *InReach*, Minister with Youth Tommy Hall's column was entitled "Providence + Youth Make A Winning Combination." As he stated:

I am on a winning team. The youth of Providence are fantastic. Congratulations to a team that pulled together in three short weeks a marvelous presentation of 'Daybreak in the Kingdom.' Thank you Debra Wallace, Patty McBrayer and Paula Withrow for being coaches with such a winning attitude. Your spirit enabled our youth to accomplish a tremendous ministry.

The 1987 revival was held March 22-25 with guest evangelist Dr. James Cammack, retired Pastor of Snyder Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville. Pastor Crouch set the stage for the revival in the March 16 *InReach*: *Our revival begins Sunday with a good preacher*

leading our worship. The format will be different and the tempo will be evangelistic. We hope you will prepare yourself for this experience by praying for God's presence, forgiveness and blessing. Surely this is a time for us to have 'renewal as a congregation.'

The Building Committee gave a Building Program update in the March 23, 1987 **InReach**:

The roof is on the new building and now the interior work begins. Completion date on the Activities Building is due by the end of June and the Chapel by the middle of May. Our goal was to have \$1,200,000 paid by June 30, so we would only need to borrow \$800,000 over the next two and a half years, as the pledges are being paid off. Your gifts to the Reach Program now will save us interest. We have received \$919,267.57 so far in gifts.

From March 23-25, 1987, Pastor Crouch conducted a revival at Mt. Gilead Baptist Church. As he stated: *Gary and Beverly Kaufman are the leaders of this congregation and it will be a joy to share revival with their people. Gary grew up in and was ordained to the ministry at Providence.*

During the March 29 vesper hour, the Young Musicians Choir presented "Miracle After Miracle," a musical drama for young voices. The performance was directed by Patty McBrayer and in the March 30 **InReach** she stated:

The Young Musicians were fantastic! 'Miracle After Miracle' was a beautiful worship experience. My thanks go to all the singers and soloists who worked so hard on their music and lines. YOU ARE THE BEST!!! Doreen Leger, Tom Baker, Polly Brant, Susan and Donnie Trexler, Michael Curry and Bob Tunstall also deserve a big 'thank you' for their valuable production help.

In the April 6, 1987 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch stated:

Our church has been missionary-minded from the beginning. We believe in reaching people for Christ and disciplining them as believers. This task begins in Charlotte and reaches out to the world. For example, George and Mary Ann Crouch and Derma Lambert have just returned from spending two months in Togo, Africa, as a part of our North

Carolina Project. On April 3, we just sent ten members to the Netherlands to work with our sister church, Trinity Baptist, in The Hague. The ten are: Inez Arant, Dorothea Compton, Bonnie Adams, Avonelle Chastain, Rod and Eva Coward, Jack and Charlotte Ellis, Chip Kissiah, and Chaperone Christine Beaman.

On Sunday, April 12, 1987, the Music Ministry presented "Then Came Sunday," an Easter Musical by Rodger Strader. The Sanctuary Choir and soloists were directed by guest director Hal McIntosh. Patty McBrayer accompanied on the organ.

The April 13 ***InReach*** carried two announcements. First, parking spaces were available in a new parking lot on the northern part of the campus. Second, the new pavilion was complete. It was covered and would seat about 75 people at tables, with lights and water available. Bobby Butler, Minister of Activities, was in charge of the facility and kept the calendar. It offered new opportunities for fellowship for the congregation and community.

In the April 27, 1987 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch announced that he and several other Providence members would participate in the first Southern Baptist Alliance Convocation at Meredith College on May 14-15, 1987. The program agenda included a drama on Baptist heritage, workshops on the seven basic principles of the Alliance, and adoption of by-laws in a business session. He concluded the column as follows:

As we come to the end of April, we have 500 members and 25 states represented. The response has been very good and the organization has been 'birthed.' We are also in the black financially. We have four churches that have joined, with that many more on the verge of joining. The response has been both positive and negative. Hopefully, the Southern Baptist Alliance will be helpful and give to some a hope for the future.

Sunday, May 17, 1987, was Providence's 33rd Anniversary Celebration. Rev. Gordon Weekley, Providence's first Pastor from 1955-1967, was the special pulpit guest at both morning services, and dinner-on-the-grounds followed in the new picnic pavilion. The pavilion was reserved for charter members and senior adults. At 1:30 pm the newly renovated Chapel was dedicated in honor of Gordon

Weekley. A portrait of Rev. Weekley was unveiled with brief dedication remarks by Pastor Crouch. A special part of the dedication was collecting and placing historical materials relating to the history of the chapel and Rev. Weekley in the chapel cornerstone by the History Committee composed of Hanson Dunbar, Rick Edwards and Gertrude Royal.

In mid-May the Missions Committee announced that the church would be co-sponsors in the new Bethany Mission in Southeast Charlotte, contribute \$100 monthly to their budget and have a member on the Steering Committee. At the time, the Mission was meeting in the Latin School. The committee also voted to pair Providence with a pioneer church as a Home Mission Project. The Mecklenburg Baptist Association had focused on Rochester, New York, for 1987-90. Providence would be paired with Metropolitan Baptist Church on the east side of Rochester. This was a real opportunity for Providence members to get involved in a mission project. The report concluded with the announcement that *Along with our Sister Church (Trinity) in the Netherlands, we would be given the opportunity, as an Association, to pair with an Association in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in the near future.*

On Mother's Day Sunday, an announcement was made that Jeff and Suzanne Brooks had made a public commitment for full-time ministry and would enter Southeastern Seminary in September 1987. Jeff was the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Brooks.

On Sunday, May 24, 1987, the new Chapel was officially opened. As Pastor Crouch stated:

Built in 1955 for the first congregation, it has been completely remodeled. Two Sunday School Departments with eight classes will also be housed in this building. The Chapel will also be used for small weddings and funerals. The Wednesday Prayer Meetings and Sunday Evening Worship Services will be held there during the summer months. Starting June 7, it would serve as the place of worship for the Korean Church.

The May 25 **InReach** announced that Julie Hamrick, the Summer Youth Associate, would begin work on May 31. Julie was from Winston-Salem, a graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill and currently a

student at Southern Seminary. She would work with all the youth as well as the college students.

In called conference on June 7, 1987, the church approved a recommendation: *To express our appreciation to Lowell Dotson for his nearly 18 years of contribution to the Music Ministry, and an Educational Scholarship Fund be established to assist Chip Dotson with expenses during his senior year at Wake Forest University. Any excess funds received would be held in escrow to be used by Suzanne Dotson at a school of her choice.*

June 1987 was filled with Vacation Bible School directed by Sue Deaton, Minister with Children; the annual Youth Mission Trip directed by Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth; the Southern Baptist Convention held in St. Louis, and completion of the Activities Center, which kept being delayed by weather conditions.

In the June 22, 1987 ***InReach***, the column entitled "Our Mission at Providence," stated:

As we approach the opening of our new facilities, a new opportunity opens for us to reach out to our community for Christ.....Emphasis will be on Bible Study and time for teachers to interpret the lessons. We want to make disciples who will learn to demonstrate the Christian lifestyle. We want to reach people for Christ and to develop into God's people on mission.

Providence is vitally involved in the community. We were the first to build a Habitat for Humanity House and will be deeply involved in the 'Miracle on 19th Street.' We are determined to be used by God to be servants to the needy of Charlotte. We have, through the years, been very mission-minded. We have sent an agricultural missionary to the Upper Volta and have helped build a chapel in Togo. God has blessed us, as a church, with resources of people and wealth. We plan to use both to minister to people in our city and the world. To be a servant church is not easy. It requires each of us to commit ourselves to be a servant. It is an attitude, as well as a response.

During the July 5 vesper hour, the Music Ministry presented a concert featuring Hal McIntosh, Linda McIntosh and Patty McBrayer. Beginning April 12, 1987, Hal McIntosh was listed as being the

Interim Minister of Music; however, nothing about him or where he came from was in the church records.

The Baptist Women held their meeting on July 7. The program featured the past WMU Directors, who highlighted the work of Providence's mission organizations since 1955. Mamie Snider, WMU Director in 1974, came from Greensboro to participate.

Sue Deaton, Minister with Children, announced in the July 6 *InReach* that Ethel Carr, Weekday Ministries Director, would receive her Masters in Education Administration, with emphasis on Daycare Administration and management, from Banks Street College of Education in New York. As she stated: *We are proud of Ethel and thank her for the hard work she does for Providence's Weekday Ministry, an important part of the total outreach ministry of our church.*

In the July 13, 1987 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced that the Providence Music Ministry had received a Kingston Harpsichord through a *gracious gift from a family in our church. It has been given in appreciation of the contribution made by Lowell Dotson and Patty McBrayer to the Music Ministry. This new addition to the instruments of our church will add a new dimension to the music ministry. The harpsichord will be available for service use and for weddings.*

In its quarterly business meeting on July 12, the church approved the following: First, sending George and Mary Ann Crouch to the Ivory Coast as mission volunteers for two months in late 1987. Second, joining the Mecklenburg Ministries as a participating member. The Ministries, formed on April 5, 1987, is a cooperative agency of churches, synagogues and governing bodies seeking to fulfill the unity and mission to which God calls them. It works to bring these religious bodies into mutually supportive interaction and into common study and ministry to the glory of God and the service of public life.

On July 26, 1987, Providence hosted the "Miracle on Main Street" Dinner for 350 workers who built Habitat for Humanity homes. Two of the special workers were former President Jimmy Carter and wife, Rosalynn. A special thanks went to Hatten Hodges, Aubrey Arant, Tom O'Neal, Wendell Sloan and hundreds of other

Providence members who helped build the homes and serve as hosts for the dinner. It was a great day for Providence.

Sunday, August 9, 1987, was Summer Youth Associate Julie Hamrick's last day at Providence. As Minister with Youth Tommy Hall stated in the August 3 *InReach*: *Thank you, Julie, for a marvelous job with our youth and college students this summer. You have endeared yourself to us forever. This Sunday evening, after the evening worship, there will be a fellowship to honor Julie. She will be preaching in the service, so come hear her and then show your appreciation for a job well-done.*

In the August 10, 1987 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch gave a summary of Providence's recent building program:

Let me remind you what has been included in the total building program. The first addition was an outdoor pavilion for cookouts and is in the center of the athletic fields. New parking lot with lights provides us excellent off-street facilities for safe parking for approximately 400 cars. A new Chapel gives us additional worship and educational facilities. The Activities Building adds 33,000 square feet of educational space and recreational gathering space. It includes a new media center and church parlor. We are remodeling our kitchen and serving areas for better service in the food area. Also we plan to add some office space in the old library. The athletic fields, running tracks and tennis courts will complete our plans.

Sunday, August 30, 1987, was a Day of Celebration, beginning with a Sunday School goal of 1,000, followed by one worship service at 11:00 am. A covered dish luncheon in the new gym was followed by a 1:15 pm dedication of the Activities Center, laying of the cornerstone and tour of the building. Two special guests were Bobby Jones and Eddie Payne, whose pictures adorn the walls of the Christian Life Center. Pastor Crouch in the August 31 *InReach* summed the day up as follows: *Sunday was a great experience of worship, fellowship and accomplishment!*

Minister with Children Sue Deaton announced two staff changes on August 24. First, Ethel Carr, Weekday Ministries Director for a year, had resigned effective August 21. Secondly, Shirley Wingate had accepted the position of Children's Training Coordinator.

September 1987 began with the State Missions Offering Campaign with the theme, "Changing Lives Through State Missions." The State Baptist Convention goal was \$1,200,000 with the Providence goal being \$4,666. Pastor Crouch summed it up as follows:

State missions is our opportunity to respond to the commission of Jesus to 'be witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea.' As members of Providence and North Carolina Baptists, we must all pray for State Missions, give to State Missions, and be personally involved in State Missions. Reaching North Carolina for Christ should be our first step in world missions.

On September 13, there was an Ordination Service for Minister with Children Sue Deaton, a native of Georgia and graduate of Shorter College and New Orleans Baptist Seminary. She came to Providence in November 1986. Prior to that date, she served as Preschool and Children's Minister at the First Baptist Church of Rome, Georgia, whose Pastor, Dr. Floyd Roebuck, preached the Ordination Sermon.

Sue Deaton announced on September 14, 1987, that Sara Ponder had accepted the position of Weekday Ministries Director. She had served for five years as Weekday Ministries Director at Shamrock Baptist Church prior to joining Providence in March 1985 as Preschool Associate. Sue also announced that Paula Rivers, a native of Atlanta, had accepted the position of Children's Ministry Associate. As part of her responsibilities, she would also serve as lead teacher in the toddler daycare room.

On October 1, 1987, Henry Crouch began his twentieth year as pastor. As he stated in the September 28 *InReach*: *Let me pledge my best efforts for the year ahead. I'm grateful for the opportunity of pastoring Providence. You have been gracious, forgiving and supportive. Together, we can make our Adventure more exciting and fruitful for God's glory!*

In called conference on October 11, 1987, the church adopted a budget of \$1,524,600 for 1988. As Pastor Crouch stated: *It represents many different ways the congregation will seek to spread the Gospel at home and abroad and bring 'New Life in '88.'* Jeff and Marie Gaskin were named Stewardship Emphasis Chairs; their task

was to get church members to pledge the budget IN ONE DAY, November 15.

In the October 19, 1987 *InReach*, Patty McBrayer announced her resignation as Music Associate. *For the past two years, I have felt the desire to make some career changes. I feel that the time has come to move in a new direction. I am grateful for the opportunities and challenges Providence has afforded me these last nine years, but I am also excited about the challenges and opportunities of the future.*

In the October 26 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch expressed his growing concern about the takeover of Baptist institutions by the “fundamentalists:”

It is with dismay and alarm that I view the takeover this month of Southeastern Seminary by the fundamentalist trustees. They replaced all committee chairs and set up new procedures for selecting new professors. Their plan is to make Southeastern into a narrow, one dimensional theological institution. Last Thursday, President Lolley and Dean Ashcraft began the termination of their leadership of the Seminary. Their courage, integrity and convictions are exemplary in the history of Southern Baptist theological education.....Baptists who fail to realize the crisis and still think it's going away are naïve. The State Convention, in Greensboro, will be a test of strength between the two groups. It is not a battle over liberalism but one of control of our institutions. We are being 'taken over' by a group of fundamentalists who did not build the Convention and its institutions. Suspicion has replaced trust in our ranks. Our denomination is about to be destroyed!

Have you ever thought about what takes place at Providence IN ONE DAY ? Well, the October 26, 1987 *InReach* did:

IN ONE DAY at Providence:

- 300 Children are cared for in the Weekday Ministries
- 150 Members and guests use the Christian Life Center
- 250 Senior adults attend the Shepherd's Center
- “Adventures in Learning” and are fed lunch

IN ONE DAY at Providence:

- 64 Staff members insure the continuance of God's work
- 750 People attend Sunday School
- 900 People gather for Sunday Worship Services

IN ONE DAY at Providence:

- 90 Children participate in choir activities
- 50 Girls attend Girl Scouts and Brownie meetings
- 300 Dinners are served on Wednesday nights

IN ONE DAY at Providence:

We plan to pledge the 1988 budget. Months of preparation precede Pledge Sunday, November 15. The Stewardship Committee joins Jeff and Marie Gaskin, this year's Stewardship Emphasis Chairs, in requesting prayers for the successful completion of this campaign.

IN ONE DAY!

To whom much is given.....much is expected.

The October 26 *InReach* also carried two congratulations. First, on November 5, 1987, the new North Carolina Welcome Center on I-77 would be named for the late John Q. Burnette in a special Dedication Ceremony. Pastor Crouch gave the Invocation, which was attended by Mrs. Allie Burnette and daughters Diane and Marie. John Burnette served as a Highway Commission member and was Deputy Secretary of Transportation for the State of North Carolina at the time of his death in 1986. Second, Henry and Sue Keziah celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in October.

As the November 15 "IN ONE DAY" pledge the 1988 budget of \$1,524,600 neared, Pastor Crouch stated:

Our church is at a crossroads! Last year we suffered from some inner frustrations as we suddenly received national publicity because of the conflict in the denomination. Our willingness to be confrontive and lead out created a fear that caused loss. Other churches gained from our loss because they ignored the issues or pretended they didn't exist. Now the time has come when even the naïve wake up to the real dangers of an exclusive control by narrow folk.

During the interim, we took our losses and dealt with the women leadership issue and the openness of membership.

Those who joined us came accepting our position and thus helped fortify our moderate position. We accept the basic Baptist principles that made our heritage great. We know we are diverse and believe that will help us mature into a very significant congregation in Charlotte.

Our 1988 budget becomes very important to undergird our missions and programs for next year. NEW LIFE IN '88 – signs around indicate its truth – and it depends upon our commitment and generosity. Let's do it by the 15th!

On November 1, 1987, Minister with Children Sue Deaton began her second year. It had been a very productive first year. As Sue stated: *Thank you, Providence, for a wonderful first year with you. I am grateful for your cooperation, your support and your love. Thank you for being the remarkable church you are.* Sue announced on November 9 that Karen Shaw, a graduate of Shorter College and Southeastern Seminary, had accepted the position of Children's Ministry Associate, effective December 13, 1987.

The November 16 *InReach* announced that David B. Sentelle, former Providence beloved Sunday School teacher and deacon, would be invested on December 7 as a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. He was a Federal District Court Judge serving in Asheville at the time.

On November 25, 1987, Providence hosted the annual Thanksgiving Service with Pastor Crouch and the Sanctuary Choir participating in the service. The Thanksgiving Sermon was delivered by Dr. Larry Wilkinson, Pastor of Providence United Methodist Church.

In called conference on November 22, the church voted to call Rev. Eddie Lockamy as its next Minister of Music. Rev. Lockamy had led our denomination through music for 16 years. In addition, he had been a frequent guest at denominational and state assemblies as worship and music leader. He was a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and New Orleans Baptist Seminary. Rev. Lockamy and his wife, Faye, were both natives of North Carolina and had two children, Jennifer and Michael.

In a letter dated November 23, 1987, Rev. Lockamy stated: *We were delighted to learn of your call last Sunday evening to become your Minister of Music. It is with a deep sense of humility and*

gratitude unto the Lord that we accept this call. Our first Sunday with you will be January 10, 1988. At the time, he was Minister of Music at Neptune Baptist Church in Florida.

On Sunday, November 29, 1987, the Advent Season began. In his weekly ***InReach*** column, Pastor Crouch stated:

Advent is man's countdown to Christmas. It is preparation within our hearts to receive, anew, God's gift of love and deliverance. It is a remembrance of the blessed event of God's presence among His people and the desire to redeem us with the gift of His Son. It is an atmosphere that prevails all we do to prepare our hearts to receive His gift. It comes with merriment, color, ritual, and joy. It speaks of hope, peace, love, and faith. The Advent is God reaching out with the promise of love to all men – to the unloved, unwanted and unworthy – and opens the door of mercy, forgiveness and restoration of a relationship with the Almighty.

Like the word adventure, Advent is from the latin 'ad (and) venire' – and means 'to come.' Something is about to happen and the important event is all God's doing. It requires a time for preparation of mind and heart. Hopefully, this season will be a wonderful time for reflection and recommitment.

December 1987 began with the annual Foreign Missions Campaign, culminating in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The national goal was \$75,000,000 with the Providence goal set at \$36,500. Part of the Providence offering went to help Trinity Baptist Church in The Hague to secure a building for worship. The guest speaker for the Lottie Moon Campaign was Dr. John R. Cheyne, Director of the Human Needs Department of the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond. In his position, Dr. Cheyne related to the programs of hunger relief, health care, social work, agriculture and disaster response.

During the December 6 vesper hour, the Music Ministry presented "An Advent Concert" featuring Patty McBrayer. Following the concert, a reception honored Patty for her nine years of service to the Music Ministry.

At the December 13 vesper hour, "A Service of Carols" featured the Preschool Choir (Vannah Terlizzi), the Music Makers I Choir (Edna Mae Fisher), the Music Makers II Choir (Debra Wallace) and the Young Musicians Choir (Patty McBrayer). The young people gave a marvelous performance.

Lastly, there was the December 20 vesper hour Christmas Candlelight Service and the December 24 Christmas Eve Service. As Pastor Crouch stated in the December 21, 1987 *InReach*:

The Candlelight Service was beautiful and a highlight of the year! As we celebrate God's love and presence in our world, the joy of the season brings hope to all. On Christmas Eve, we gather to light the Christmas Candle and bow to worship Christ. We will acknowledge the reign of the Lord in our hearts and recommit ourselves to be His servants in this world.

As 1987 drew to a close, there was much concern about the 1988 budget. On Pledge Day, November 15, 88% of the budget was pledged. By the end of December, the total had risen to 92%, still short by \$128,000. Either the budget had to be revised downward or a mini-campaign headed by the Stewardship Committee undertaken for the unpledged amount. They chose the mini-campaign.

In the December 28 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch wrote a column entitled "A Year In Retrospect.:"

1987 has been a big year for us at Providence! We began the year with the addition of Bobby Butler as Minister of Activities and the anticipation of new facilities. The denominational crisis created for us a problem when the pastor accepted the presidency of the Southern Baptist Alliance, without prior approval of the congregation. Misunderstood at first – it became evident later that his predictions were true when the Southeastern situation became a crisis – and Baptists began to wake up. Perhaps this stir within the congregation made us look at convictions and be willing to be real Baptists.

We had two resignations in the Music Ministry this year – Lowell Dotson, after 17 years, and Patty McBrayer, after nine years. Both have gone into secular vocations, but they have left behind a noble music heritage. Hal McIntosh

has done a tremendous job of holding things together during the interim.

We completed our Christian Life Center – added additional playground, parking and picnic areas. We refinished the original sanctuary and made it the Gordon Weekley Chapel. Our campus is now complete with quality buildings.

Financially, we raised one million dollars for the new building and over a million for the budget. We had 25 babies born, 40 baptisms, 8 deaths, and 32 weddings. We close the year with 2,430 members (resident 2,127, non-resident, 303) which includes 139 Koreans. We received a gift from the Dorsey estate to help us begin our Endowment Program. It was a great year!

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1987, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Retired Missionary to Chile

Dr. Ed Bagley, Professor of Religion, Wingate College

Dr. George Bullard, Director of Missions Division, South Carolina Baptist Convention

Rev. Bobby Butler, Minister of Activities

Dr. John R. Cheyne, Director of Human Needs Department of Foreign Missions Board, Richmond

Dr. James Cammack, Retired Pastor, Snyder Memorial Baptist Church of Fayetteville

Dr. Bill Crouch, Director of Development, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina

Rev. Lloyd V. Fish, Jr., Director, Planned Giving, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina

Dr. Ernest Glass, Former Pastor, Shamrock Baptist

Rev. Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth

Ms. Julie Hamrick, Summer Youth Associate

Dr. Floyd Roebuck, Pastor, First Baptist, Rome, Georgia

Mr. William P. Stillerman, President, Baptist Retirement Homes of North Carolina

Rev. Robert Sumrall, Jr., Director of Missions, Greater Rochester Baptist Association

Dr. Charles Talbert, Professor of New Testament, Wake Forest University

Rev. Gordon Weekley, Executive Dir., Rebound, Inc.

Dr. Larry Wilkinson, Pastor, Providence United Methodist Church

In the January 4, 1988 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated: *Preaching is an exciting venture for me as we gather each Sunday for worship! Great care is taken to keep the subject matter varied, informative, instructive and motivational. What is our greatest need and what will help us, as Christians, as we begin 1988?*

On Sunday, January 10, 1988, Providence welcomed Eddie Lockamy as its second full-time Minister of Music. Eddie and Faye and their two children, Jennifer and Michael, came from Neptune Baptist Church in Florida. Following the vesper hour on January 17, there was a Reception/Pounding for the Lockamy family.

In the January 11 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced:

Our church has just received a gift of \$108,000 from J. E. and Roxy Dorsey's estate. They were generous and faithful members of our church in their lifetime. Now, they will also participate in the on-going of our church. Part of the gift will go to the Building Program and will be used as a memorial to them, and will also be daily useful to our church family. Part of the gift will start our basic Endowment Program for the church. It joins three other similar gifts. First was the Randy Moore Music Endowment, which was started by family and friends of Randy Moore, one of our young people who died from a tragic accident. Second is the Mildred and Lloyd Massey Endowment, which is used as a minister's discretionary fund for the needy and other special needs. Hundreds have received help and it will continue to serve our people. Third is the Arthur Nebel Music Endowment Fund. Arthur was a church member until his death in November 1987.

A note in the January 11 *InReach* stated: *Our newly renovated Chapel has now been used for worship, weddings and a funeral. The first wedding was on July 25, 1987, with Avonelle Chastain and Wilson Goolsby. The first funeral was on January 9, 1988, for Mrs. Arlene Grimes, a charter member.*

In the January 25 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

We should be responsive and get involved in meeting social needs of Charlotte.....We have joined the Mecklenburg Ministries to work together to solve some of the problems in our city. One of the major issues is the homeless who live on our streets. We need permanent shelter in Charlotte. A concentrated effort is being made by the mayor, civic leaders and the Mecklenburg Ministries to find an answer. The plight of the homeless is critical and will not go away. George Shinn, one of our members, has offered to raise funds privately to remodel the old Naval Reserve Building on 5th Street. In addition, Aubrey Arant is now on the Board of Habitat for Humanity. We will continue our interest in this housing project for low income folk.....I'm grateful to live in such a lovely city!

The annual Bible Study was held February 14-17, 1988, entitled "Rekindling the Fires of Faith: A Study in Malachi." The guest teacher for adults and youth was Dr. J. J. Owens, a retired Professor of Old Testament at Southern Seminary.

On February 18, Providence hosted a seminar entitled *Ingathering: Reclaiming Inactive Church Members* with Marlan Seward, Church Training Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, as the guest teacher. The seminar's objective was to help churches reach inward and get inactive members back into the life of the church.

During late February 1988, Pastor Crouch was appointed as Chaplain for the Charlotte Hornets and Charlotte Knights by church member and owner George Shinn. There was a condition placed on the appointment. Pastor Crouch was *expected to set a good example and encourage the athletes to think 'thin.'*

March 1988 began with a visit from Dr. Edwin Hewlett, Pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church of Rochester, New York. The visit was appropriate because Providence was to be paired with Metropolitan in a home mission "sister" relationship. Dr. Hewlett showed slides of the church and its special mission needs.

On March 7, 1988, the Music Ministry sponsored a concert featuring the Singing Churchmen. Regrettably, there is no information about the group or the type of music they performed.

March 6-13, 1988, was the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, culminating in the Annie Armstrong Offering. The 1988 theme was "A Church For Everyone." Due to the takeover of the Home Mission Board by the Southern Baptist Convention conservatives, Providence voted to divide its \$11,500 offering between the Home Mission Board and Rochester, New York, where opportunities would open up to permit Providence volunteers to go to Rochester for actual ministry.

In the March 7 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch stated: *I will soon be ending my term as the "first" President of the Southern Baptist Alliance.....The Alliance began last February, with 22 members and a vision of promoting Baptist principles among our denomination.... We now have 34 churches, from 11 states, that have joined, representing 20,000 members.....North Carolina leads all states with 11 churches and a total of 8,973 members.* At the time, Providence had not joined, and much tension developed due to Pastor Crouch's deep involvement. Some members thought there was too much involvement, and this would be a major factor in the 1989-1990 "crisis" that would lead to Pastor Crouch's resignation.

March 12-20, 1988, was Youth Week with the theme, "Crossroads." In the March 14, 1988 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch said:

Tommy Hall has done a magnificent job for four years as our Minister to Youth. He has developed a strong educational program and leadership among our youth. I appreciate Tommy's ministry with our young people and their families. As Tommy so frequently says, 'Youth are not only leaders of tomorrow, they are leaders in ministry today!'

In the March 21, 1988 **InReach**, Eddie Lockamy stated: *I believe last Sunday's 'Youth Sunday' was the very best that I have ever witnessed in my 19 years of ministry. Thank you, Youth Choir, Brass Ensemble, Handbell Choir and Carter Cook for making the music so wonderful.*

In the March 28 **InReach**, Eddie announced:

During the past two weeks the final additions were made to our organ. These additions complete our beautiful Schantz Organ that was first installed in 1977. These additions include an eight-foot Gamba, eight-foot flute harmonique, eight-foot clarinet, V-rank cornet and thirty-two-foot pedal

enhancements. It takes the organ from a 50-rank to 58-rank pipe organ including the enhancements to the pedal. This instrument greatly enhances our worship. We owe our gratitude to Nita and Harry Moss for this wonderful organ. This instrument is now valued well over \$300,000 and will have a lasting impact upon our church for years to come.

On Sunday evening, March 31, 1988, the Sanctuary Choir, under the direction of Eddie Lockamy, presented "The Seven Last Words of Christ," a sacred cantata by Theodore Dubois. The choir was accompanied by soloists, harp, organ and timpani. It was a beautiful tribute to the Easter Season.

At the quarterly business meeting on April 10, 1988, the congregation gave approval to build two tennis courts and install a sound system in the Activities Building and Chapel, at an estimated cost of \$50,000 to be funded from the Dorsey estate.

On April 30, Faye Lockamy, Music Assistant, graduated from Jacksonville University with a B. A. Degree in Church Music. She was also inducted into the Pi Kappa Lamda Music Honor Society on April 19, 1988.

May 1, 1988, was Senior Adult Day and Heritage Night with Mayor Sue Myrick as guest speaker at the senior luncheon. Dr. Charles Holland, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Gastonia, was the Heritage Night speaker.

In the May 2, 1988 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced that, effective May 1, Bill and Connie Andrews would join the church staff as Missionaries in Residence and partners in the church ministry. They would help the congregation focus on missions and help foster a missionary spirit in Providence members. It was good to have them back following 37 years as missionaries in Chile.

On May 14, 1988, the Women's Missionary Union celebrated 100 years of missions work.....The national celebration was held in Richmond, Virginia, with 11,000 women from all 50 states and 25 countries participating. Dorothea Compton reported that Providence's WMU met seven of the 11 Centennial goals:

Our thanks to Director Debra Wallace for guiding us through this special year and to Baptist Women's President Connie McDonald for the beautiful Centennial Cake she made and decorated for Homecoming.....A word about Kitty Crouch

*who served as the Associational Centennial Chair. In Richmond, her 1888 costume was so authentic that she was selected to represent the WMU birth year in a fashion show. She was precious in her lace blouse and long bustled skirt and big-flowered hat with matching parasol. Kitty's popularity was fitting, because she grew up in WMU, following her mother's example. She has served in many capacities, written for mission magazines and authored the North Carolina WMU History, **The Magnificent Nobility**.*

Sunday, May 15, was Providence's 34th Anniversary Celebration with dinner-on-the-grounds and much good fellowship. The Children's Choirs provided the music for the vesper hour.

The May 23, 1988, **InReach** announced that Pastor Crouch was featured in the new June **Southern Magazine** concerning the Southern Baptist Convention crisis and the role of the Southern Baptist Alliance. The article was written by **The Charlotte Observer** reporter, Frye Gaillard. The same **InReach** announced that Maxine Dunn had completed her 15th year as Financial Secretary. *Maxine's quiet demeanor, keen sense of humor, and ever-willing spirit to 'lend a hand' have endeared her to all the staff members, as well as the congregation. We express to her our deepest appreciation!* In the same issue, the congregation was asked to pray for deacon and Sunday School teacher Rod Coward, who was serving as a short-term missions volunteer in Poland with the North Carolina Baptist Men and would return on June 5.

May 29, 1988, was the annual Baccalaureate Service honoring the high school seniors. The vesper hour featured the church youth with Tommy Hall, Minister to Youth, preaching the evening message.

On June 5, 1988, a Musical Celebration commemorated the completion of the Schantz Pipe Organ. The gift by Nita and Harry Moss was given in memory of their parents. The guest organist was Dan Morgan from Riverside Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida, and the guest vocalist was Hal Shoemaker, Minister of Music at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church. Nita and Harry Moss's son, Bob, played the trumpet in the Musical Celebration. It was a grand evening of music and fellowship.

During Pastor Crouch's absence on Sunday, June 12, 1988, the guest speaker was Rev. Wendell Davis, retired Pastor of Midwood Baptist Church. In addition, during both morning services, the Rome Boys Choir, directed by Dr. Allen Wingard, provided the worship music. Dr. Wingard was Chair of the Fine Arts Department of Shorter College in Georgia. Rev. Sue Deaton preached the sermon at the vesper hour, and Bill Caldwell directed the Sanctuary Choir. Pastor Crouch and Eddie Lockamy were attending the Southern Baptist Convention in San Antonio.

The June 13, 1988, *InReach* announced that charter member and Deacon Emeritus Doug Broadway had died. Doug had been ill for some time and had missed the church and people that he loved.

In the June 20 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch gave a summary appraisal of the San Antonio 131st Southern Baptist Convention:

The takeover is now complete. The fundamentalists are now in control of our Convention and they vow not to allow any participation from those who disagree. People like us are now disenfranchised and will not be allowed to play a role in decision-making. The defeated candidate's church gave more last year to the Cooperative Program than the combined gifts from the last five Presidents.

The real issue is not theology but control of our denominational machinery, missions, and bureaucracy. We will notice changes in personnel, policies, and in the literature. Fundamentalists give very little to the denomination and have created fear and mistrust among our people. Can they afford our Convention if those of us who give redirect our gifts to other concerns.

For ten years I have sought to warn and awaken our people. The days ahead will be shocking to some and disappointing to most of us. The resolution passed that sets aside the 'priesthood of the believer' and calls for submission to the pastor's leadership. This makes us sound just like pre-Reformation days and moves us closer to the Catholics in the style of leadership in our denomination. The defunding of the Baptist Joint Affairs Committee is not a good move.

The Southern Baptist Alliance becomes more important as a fellowship of real Baptists who want to maintain the traditional principles that gave us a great denomination. I'm glad that it's in place and would encourage our people to support it by joining. It is imperative that all of us get involved.

Good advice, but this issue led to a crisis at Providence during 1989-1990 that eventually forced Pastor Crouch to retire.

The June 20, 1988, ***InReach*** announced that Fred Salley, Minister to Single Adults, had submitted his resignation. Fred had accepted the position of Recruiter/Counselor at Darlington Technical College in Florence, South Carolina. As Pastor Crouch stated: *Fred has been an asset to our ministry at Providence and we will miss him.*

On Wednesday night, July 6, the service was led by missionaries Ken and Marti Helms, who shared slides of their mission work in Spain. Dr. and Mrs. Helms became Southern Baptist Convention missionaries in 1984, while members at Providence. They were on furlough with Melinda, their daughter, and living in Greensboro.

Pastor Crouch's column in the July 11, 1988 ***InReach*** was "Koreans On The Move:"

Our Korean Mission will be eight years old in October. They have been meeting in our facilities (except for a short interim) since 1980. They are being incorporated and will be organized into a church in October. They are preparing to launch out on their own in the very near future.

Recently, they have found six acres of land on Albemarle Road. This beautiful piece of property includes buildings of the old Albemarle Road Baptist Mission. They signed a contract for \$180,000 to purchase this campus. They have \$20,000 from the Baptist State Convention and Mecklenburg Association to use for a down payment. They plan to sell the ten acres they bought on Pence Road and use the proceeds to pay on the loan.

This decision has a real advantage. They can begin immediately using their own facilities. They will be the first ethnic group in Charlotte to own their own buildings and house their family.

Financially, we are committed to help them on the purchase for the remainder of this year and the next two years. We want to help them clean-up, paint, and get ready for their opening day. Bill Andrews is coordinating our participation. It is exciting to be a part of such an enthusiastic missionary family.

Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth, announced that on June 22 Rob Tunstall was honored by Governor Jim Martin with the Governor's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Forensics and for winning the State Championship for North Carolina for Humorous Interpretation. He also asked for prayers for the youth and counselors as they prepared to leave on July 16 for the 1988 Mission Trip to New York, where they would be working with the Chinese Promise Baptist Church. The trip would conclude with attendance at the Youth for Christ DC '88 in Washington, DC.

In the June 18, 1988 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch paid a special tribute to missionary families that had visited Providence during the summer of 1988. They were: Connie and Bill Andrews (formerly Chile, currently Missionaries in Residence), Dan and Menda Sue Hatfield (Panama), Ken and Marti Helms (Spain), and David and Naomi Coward (Indonesia).

The same issue of the *InReach* announced that Rev. Ben Rentz had been elected as Chair of the Deacon Body for 1988-1989. Ben and Rachel joined Providence in 1976. Ben was a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Seminary.

The Providence deacons held a series of forums in July and August 1988 to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of joining or participating in the Southern Baptist Alliance. Two special guests attended the August 7 Forum. Dr. Tom Graves, Pastor of St. John's Baptist Church and former Professor at Southeastern Seminary, presented information about the Alliance at the beginning of the Forum. Bill Poe, former President of the Baptist Convention of North Carolina, former member of the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee, local attorney and member of the First Baptist Church, shared his experiences and expertise within the Southern Baptist Convention.

The discussions about the Southern Baptist Convention and the Alliance led Pastor Crouch, in the July 25 *InReach*, to write a column entitled “Convictions and Principles:”

Why do we have to make a decision about our stance as Baptists? Convictions about principles force your pastor into a particular stance about the church, the Bible, other Christians, separation of church and state, and other basic issues. I cannot put my head in the sand and pretend it doesn't matter. (He then gives a long description of his involvement and participation in Baptist activities for over 35 years.)

Will it hurt us to take a stand? My response is no. Life is easier when convictions govern our actions and responses. We welcome diversity and never expect all to agree, but people should not wonder where we stand.

With all the harassment, false accusations made about my theology, and remarks made behind my back by some – there is no doubt where Henry Crouch stands as a person, a Baptist, or as a Christian leader. Providence will benefit by taking a stand as to its stance on basic Baptist principles. Mark my words – It pays to take a stand and it leaves no doubt as to what kind of church we want to be in our community and world. People respond best to integrity and convictions.

On August 7, 1988, the Music Ministry presented a concert entitled “Destination Promised Land, A Kid’s Eye-View of the Exodus,” featuring the Summer Children’s Choir directed by Faye Lockamy, Music Associate. On August 14, a concert entitled “Surrender” by Claire and Curt Cloninger featured the Youth Choir, directed by Eddie Lockamy.

August 14, 1988, was Language Missions Day with Bill Andrews, Missionary in Residence, preaching. The Korean Church Choir and congregation participated in the special service.

On Sunday, August 14, Providence said *goodbye* and *thank you* to Neil Welborne who had worked for eight months as a Recreation Assistant with the Activities Ministry. As Tommy Hall stated in the August 8 *InReach*: *The youth ministry at Providence in the summer is exciting. One of the major reasons the summer of 1988*

has been so great is because of Neil Welborne. The youth of Providence and Tommy Hall will remember you forever for the summer you shared with us.

Due to the tensions over the Southern Baptist Convention and Alliance Forums, Associate Pastor Lee McDonald taught two Wednesday evening sessions entitled "A Special Study On Fear," subdivided into "Fear and Trust" and "Fear, the Weapon of Intimidation."

In a called business meeting on Sunday, August 21, 1988, the church approved the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to grant Pastor Crouch a two-month Sabbatical Leave in June-July 1989 in appreciation of his 20 years of service to Providence. The presentation was made the first Sunday in October on his twentieth anniversary date. Pastor Crouch was pleased by the sabbatical gift; however, this time was used by individual and small dissident groups to organize a campaign to force his resignation upon his return in late August 1989.

During the August 28, 1988 vesper hour, Tommy Hall and the 34 youth who went on the Mission Trip showed slides, sang and gave testimony of a journey that began on July 16 and would last forever. As Tommy stated: *The 34 youth carried the torch of the Lord high and touched the lives of over 200 children. Those same 34 came back bonded by the commitment to carry the torch to their homes, schools and everywhere they go. They are becoming involved in discipleship and evangelism at Providence.*

September 1, 1988, marked two staff anniversaries. Lee McDonald completed his seventh anniversary as Associate Pastor, and Tommy Hall celebrated his fifth anniversary as Minister to Youth.

The fall program began with Training Seminars on Wednesday evenings from September 5-October 12: *A Study of Revelation* (Pastor Crouch), *Jesus the Teacher* (Rod Coward, Ed Haire), *The Moral and Spiritual Development of Children* (Sue Deaton), and *The History and Doctrines of Fundamentalism* (Lee McDonald).

On Sunday, September 11, there was just one morning worship service with Pastor Crouch's sermon entitled "Partnership In The Gospel" and a concert by the Sanctuary Choir and orchestra called "2000 A.D.: A Challenge to Witness." As a key part of the service,

the congregation was asked to renew Providence's Church Covenant "to be a servant church."

The entire month of September 1988 was devoted to the State Missions Offering for Baptist institutions and agencies. The State goal was \$1,600,000. Providence, for the first time, did not set a goal. An announcement was made that offerings would be received during the month of September.

Providence participated in two hands-on-missions projects in September 1988. First, on September 17, members helped clean-up and repair the old Albemarle Road Baptist Mission for use by the Korean Fellowship. Second, on September 24, Providence joined the Mecklenburg Parks and Recreation Department in sponsoring a fund-raiser for Charlotte's Homeless and Rehabilitation Shelter. Mayor Sue Myrick and George Shinn were the fund-raiser hosts. In addition, Providence members raised the funds and built another Habitat for Humanity Home.

The Sanctuary Choir held a retreat September 16-17 to sharpen its skills and begin rehearsing new fall music. The guest "clinician" for the weekend was Dr. Jim Woodward, Music Department Chair from Oklahoma Baptist University. As Minister of Music Eddie Lockamy stated: *Dr. Woodward is one of the finest choral directors in our country. It will be a privilege to have him work with our Sanctuary Choir.*

On October 1, 1988, Henry Crouch began his twenty-first year as Pastor. Sunday, October 2, was a Day of Celebration to honor Henry and Jan Crouch for their 20 years of ministry. The guest speaker at both morning worship services was Rev. Doris Walters, a missionary to Japan for 22 years. At the vesper hour, a vocal concert featured tenor Joseph Blanton, one of the nation's premier vocalists. At the time, he was residing in Shelby.

The October 10 *InReach* announced that Donna and Mike Sanford had been selected to lead the Special Stewardship Emphasis to underwrite the 1989 budget. The campaign theme was "Stewardship '89: Count It All Joy!" On October 29, 1988, the Activities Ministry sponsored Providence's first Harvest Festival which was a fall crafts and hobbies fun day. As Bobby Butler stated: *We had a wide variety of exhibits, which included quilting, painting, wind chimes, doll making, crocheting, stained glass,*

woodworking, and many others.....It was a good time of learning and sharing together.

At the vesper hour on November 6, the Senior Adult Choir made its “debut performance” in “Saints Alive” directed by Eddie Lockamy. They were very inspiring.

The November 7, 1988, ***InReach*** announced the staff retirement of Jackie Cromer. She had served the church for three years as a Daycare Teacher and then as Assistant to the Director of the Weekday Ministries Program. As Sue Deaton stated: *We appreciate Jackie and her work and wish her the best as she enjoys some well-deserved rest and relaxation.*

Pastor Crouch’s column title in the November 14 ***InReach*** was “An Opportunity For All!” He stated: *Sunday, November 20, is Victory Sunday! We have two objectives – to pledge the 1989 budget of \$1,639,000 and do it IN ONE DAY! What appears to be madness is actually an act of faith!* They actually pledged \$1,380,000 or 84% of the goal, which was not bad.

The November 14 ***InReach*** also carried a special thanks to Jacque and Jim Kirkley for 25 new Bibles to be placed in the Chapel in honor of Dennis and Janet Kirkley, missionaries to Indonesia. In addition, Jim West, a Providence member and freshman at Wake Forest, had been selected to receive the William Henry Crouch Scholarship for the 1988-89 academic year. On November 16, Minister to Children Sue Deaton celebrated her second anniversary.

In the November 21, 1988 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch gave a summary of the just-completed North Carolina Baptist State Convention held in Fayetteville:

I am concerned with the spirit and hostile attitude of those who dissent. We saw it first at the Southern Baptist Convention. There were several angry outbursts in Fayetteville. Division seems to be social-economic, educational and style of leadership.....One reason the Southern Baptist Alliance is so important to me is it provides a way by which I can be in the minority in the Convention and stand for principles I hold dear and support mission causes that get cut from the Southern Baptist Convention budget. The Alliance is not political and does not take an active role in either State or Southern

Baptist Convention sessions. We would include all Baptists and seek to get our denomination to remain loyal to our basic principles that have made us a distinctive people.

The mission emphasis during late November and early December was on the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions. The national goal was \$84,000,000 with the Providence goal being \$36,500. The 1988 theme was "We Must Make Christ Known!"

The 1988 Christmas Season began with Pastor Crouch's "A Christmas Blessing" column:

The joy and excitement of Christmas is everywhere!.....As God's peacemakers, we have many opportunities to minister in His name. Christmas is the golden chance to share some of the blessings with others. Let us be doers of the Gospel, as well as listeners. Jesus suggested we go in peace –forgiven and alive – to be His followers in a world of division.

The congregation responded by collecting \$10,000 worth of clothing for the Baptist Children's Home.

The Sanctuary Choir's Christmas concert on December 18, 1988, was "And We Beheld His Glory." The annual Candlelight and Communion Service was held on Christmas Eve, with the music presented by the Youth Choirs conducted by Eddie Lockamy.

The year 1988 concluded with two hands-on-mission projects. First, the youth adopted three families during the holidays and voted to work with them as an ongoing ministry. Second, the new homeless shelter on North Tryon Street was open for the holidays. Hunter Cook was on the board. Member George Shinn had been raising funds for the shelter through the business community, and today it is named "The George Shinn Shelter" in his honor.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1988, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary in Residence

Rev. Wendell Davis, Retired Pastor, Midwood Baptist Church

Rev. Sue Deaton, Minister with Children

Dr. Don Garner, Professor of Old Testament, Carson-Newman College, Tennessee

Rev. Tommy Hall, Minister to Youth

Rev. Ken Helms, Missionary to Spain

Dr. Edwin Hewlett, Pastor, Metropolitan Baptist Church of Rochester, New York

Dr. Charles Holland, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Gastonia

Rev. Dennis Kirkley, Missionary to Indonesia

Rev. Lee McDonald, Associate Pastor

Dr. J. J. Owens, Retired Professor of Old Testament, Southern Seminary

Mr. Marlan Seward, Southern Baptist Convention Church Training Department, Nashville, Tennessee

Dr. Phil Sumrall, Pastor, Mallard Creek Community Church

Rev. Doris Walters, Missionary to Japan

January 1989 began with a Charlotte area offering for the Homeless Shelter. Two Providence members played a prominent role in this campaign. Hunter Cook headed a United Way Committee to help select a permanent site for such a shelter, and George Shinn was asked to raise the \$1.5 million to get the shelter on North Tryon Street ready, which he did through various businesses and from a Charlotte Hornets exhibition game. Next, the church community was asked to raise \$275,000. January 6-8, 1989, was designated as the Weekend for the Homeless. As Pastor Crouch stated in the January 2, 1989 *InReach*: *This is real missions on the local level. I'm grateful to live in a community where church and business can join in a project of this magnitude. I'm glad that Providence has helped to provide leadership. Now let's add our dollars on January 8 to help make it a reality!* The Providence offering was \$5,527, plus providing blankets, games and other needed items.

Three Providence staff anniversaries were celebrated in January 1989. Anne Bertini had completed her third year as Senior Adult Coordinator. Bobby Butler had completed his second year as Activities Minister, and Eddie Lockamy had completed his first year as Minister of Music.

January 1989 saw a renewal of the Wednesday evening Seminars: *All Grown Up and Nowhere To Go* (Sue Deaton), *Baptist Doctrines* (Bill Andrews) and *Bible Study* (Pastor Crouch). Bill Andrews had returned to Providence on a part-time basis as Missionary in Residence.

On February 1, 1989, during the Wednesday service, the guest speakers were Mark and Susan Andrews, our Southern Baptist Missionaries to Chile. They were sent from Providence on April 5, 1981, and had been serving as Church Planters in Northern Chile.

The annual Winter Bible Study was held February 12-15, 1989, with guest teacher Dr. Jay Casey, who taught "The Gospel of John: Invitation to Life." Dr. Casey's lesson theme was "There's More to John Than 3:16;" for example: Child Like Faith, Death, Resurrection, Imagery, Fallen Women, Salvation, New Genesis, Darkness, Light and The Word. Dr. Casey, at the time, was Pastor of the Lake Norman Baptist Church and would later serve Providence as Associate Pastor.

The January 30, 1989, *InReach* announced that Dennis and Janet Kirkley, missionaries to Indonesia, had just returned for a seven-month educational furlough. Both grew up at Providence but were serving as Canadian Baptist missionaries. They would be living in Charlotte during the furlough.

The 1989 Home Mission Study theme was "Many People, One Mission, A Celebration of Cooperation." In conjunction with this theme, Providence held a Home Mission Study Course taught by Rev. Warren Mallard of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association and a church member on February 19. As a practical part of the Home Mission emphasis, four Providence men (George Crouch, Ben Rentz, Chip Kissiah and Lee Royal) joined nearly 100 people in a North Carolina Brotherhood project to rebuild hurricane-damaged buildings and to construct new facilities at the Jamaican Baptist encampment. At the same time, Mike and Gloria Squires were serving on the second KAIROS prison ministry team in Columbia, South Carolina.

In business session on February 19, 1989, the church voted to change the Cooperative Program budget item to extended Denominational Ministries. It also voted to allow individuals to designate mission gifts to several specific items. These votes came about as a result of the takeover of the Southern Baptist Convention agencies by the conservatives and gave members options to continue mission work through alternative sources.

March 5-12, 1989, was Youth Week with the theme, "Born To Win, Already One." The week's highlights were: A concert by the

“Jeremiah People,” a Youth Mission Trip Barbecue Fund-raiser, special guest Tim Kempton of the Charlotte Hornets and the youth assuming leadership roles in Sunday School and worship.

March 5-12 was also the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, culminating in the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The *InReach* explained the importance of the project as follows: *The major objective of the more than a dozen programs and ministries of the Home Mission Board and its more than 3,700 appointed missionaries is to bring people into a redemptive relationship with Jesus Christ. The theme for 1989's Week of Prayer for Home Missions encourages every Southern Baptist to 'Pray That They May Believe.'* The 1989 national goal was \$39,000,000 and the Providence goal was \$11,000. The two guests at Providence during Home Missions Week were Dean and Dorothy Kaufman, who were serving at the Metro Baptist Church in New York City. Dean preached during the morning worship services, and Dorothy led the WMU study sessions. It was good to have them back.

At the vesper hour on Palm Sunday, March 19, the Music Ministry presented a concert entitled “Celebrate Life,” based upon John 15:13: “Greater Love Hath No Man Than This, That A Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends.” The concert featured the Youth Choir and Adult Ensemble, directed by Eddie Lockamy and accompanied by Edna Mae Fisher.

In the March 20, 1989 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced a new Charlotte ministry and Providence's role in it:

Mecklenburg Ministries has begun an airport chaplaincy ministry which opened its office on March 1. The space was donated by Piedmont Airlines and is located behind the Information Counter. The Chaplain is Rev. Charles Smith who has a long service of ministry to people. Tom O'Neal has served as Chairman of the Chaplaincy Committee. I have also had the privilege of working with this group. Earl Pope donated the furniture for the chaplain's office and George Shinn helped finance the first year. During the plane crash of 1974, I saw the real need for this ministry. I'm grateful that our church has helped get this program started.

In the March 27, 1989 *InReach*, Sue Deaton, Minister with

Children, announced that Faye Sweeney would become Director of the Preschool Ministries Program with the title, Weekday Ministries Associate. She would begin her ministry on April 3, 1989.

April 1989 began with the Saturday, April 1, concert "An Evening of Singing," featuring The Amici Singers from London, England. Their repertoire included the "Te Deum," as well as other sacred classics and British folksongs.

The Baptist Women met on April 4, 1989. The guest speaker at the General Session was Janet Kirkley, missionary to Indonesia, on educational furlough.

Minister with Youth Tommy Hall announced that the annual Youth Mission Trip was scheduled July 28-August 10, 1989, to New York and New Jersey.

The April 1989 highlight was the spring revival with the theme, "Gather the People for Revival." The guest revivalist was Dr. Pete Hill, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Vero Beach, Florida. Rev. Rod Lyon, Minister of Music at the First Baptist Church of Sweetwater, Florida, led the revival music.

In the April 3 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch focused upon the church Sunday School Enrichment Campaign from April 7-15, 1989:

Through the years, the Sunday School has held an important place for Baptists to gather, not only for worship, but for the study of the scripture.....Beginning April 7, we will be placing an emphasis on enriching and expanding our work through our Bible teaching. The Sunday School Enrichment Campaign will offer us a chance to rediscover and reexamine our old dreams, and create new visions.... 'Without a vision, the people perish.'

During the 11:00 am worship service on Sunday, April 23, 1989, the Mars Hill College Choir was featured, directed by Dr. Joel Reed, Director of Choral Activities. The accompanist was Deborah Miller.

Sunday, May 7, 1989, was Senior Adult Day. The day's highlights were participating in worship services, the Senior Adult Choir singing and a luncheon following worship. However, the main feature was the vesper hour concert "Side by Side," a musical that brought together senior and youth voices, featuring the Young Musicians Choir and the Senior Adult Choir.

Anniversary Sunday was on May 21, 1989, celebrating the 35th

year of Providence's history. On May 28, guest speaker Carolyn Weatherford, Executive Director of the Southern Baptist Women's Missionary Union, spoke at both morning worship services. Finally, on May 31, a Friends Forever Concert was presented by the combined youth choirs from Carmel Baptist, First Baptist and Providence. It was a great performance.

In the May 29, 1989 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced that he was taking a sabbatical: *One of the most wonderful gifts of 20 years of ministry is the chance to get away from the routine and 'smell the roses' again.....Jan and I have two goals: a time to be with family and a time for study and reflection.....We will complete our time away in August at Lake Lure.....We leave you in good hands!*

June and July 1989 were filled with Vacation Bible School, athletic events, Youth Mission Trip to New Jersey and New York, and the selection of deacon nominees. The major summer activity was a series of Wednesday evening Open Forums held by the Personnel Committee to discuss the church personnel budget for 1990 and the church organizational structure.

The June 19 *InReach* announced the return of Wanda Noyes as Secretary with the Youth and Activities Ministries. She had previously worked as Publications Secretary.

At the July 9 church business meeting, one of the approved agenda items called for a Pastor Search Committee to be selected by the Nominating Committee and be elected by the church – for future use. This was the beginning sign/omen of discussions, arguments and budding plans that led to Pastor Crouch's forced resignation in 1990.

The July 24, 1989, *InReach* printed a letter from Myers Park Presbyterian Church expressing their thanks for tours of the Christian Life Center. Pastor Tim Croft and Tom and John Belk, Capital Campaign Co-Chairs, stated that their tours of Providence's facilities led them to build a similar one at Myers Park Presbyterian.

In the July 31, 1989 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch gave a summary of their Summer Sabbatical:

Words cannot express how grateful we are for the Sabbatical this summer! We didn't realize how tired we were or how much stress had built up in these 20 years.....We have spent some quality time with all of our children, did some traveling

to Amish Country in Pennsylvania, studied at Princeton Seminary and visited with the Dean Kaufmans in New York... We will be at Lake Lure the month of August for our regular time of preparation.

The July 31 **InReach** also carried a "Thank You from Jamaica" as a result of the mission trip in which Ben Rentz, Chip Kissiah and Lee Royal assisted in the building of the Baptist Conference Center. The writer was Rev. Vincent Fletcher of the Kettering Circuit of Baptist Churches in Jamaica.

During the vesper hour on Sunday, August 13, there was a "welcome home" for the Youth Mission Team. They shared their work and experiences while conducting Bible Schools, doing repair jobs and giving concerts in New Jersey and New York. Their theme was "Youth on Mission: Sharing His Love." Rev. Tommy Hall, chaperones and the 40 youth received a "well-done" for their trip.

August 1989 began with preparations for a new church year, with calls for joining choirs and preparing the 1990 church budget. In the August 21, 1989 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch stated, *We are back on the job! Early due to the illness of his father, Dr. Perry Crouch. My advance study time has suffered, but otherwise we return with enthusiasm for the year ahead. We have a tremendous opportunity and God has blessed us in the past. The Stewardship Committee has set our emphasis as 'Focus on Christ' for the fall and that will be the topic as we gather for the Lord's Supper the first Sunday in September.*

The same August 21 **InReach** also carried the news of two staff resignations. First, Minister of Music Eddie Lockamy resigned to accept a similar position at Southside Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida, effective September 3. Second, Faye Sweeney, Weekday Ministry Associate since April 1989, resigned effective September 15. Both would be missed.

Henry Crouch returned from his sabbatical in mid-August 1989 into a building storm with himself as the center of growing controversy. He had to be "shell-shocked" by the sudden impact of the intense controversy directed at him. Thus, on the evening of August 27, he wrote out his Pastoral Resignation which was published in the August 28, 1989, **InReach**:

Dear Congregation:

I returned from my vacation and sabbatical two weeks earlier than expected. Instead of the warmth of welcome, we were greeted with the shocking experience of feeling that something was amiss.

I write this letter to you to let you know there is no scandal involved, nor moral failure. Rather, it would appear that my leadership style, denominational involvement and personality are being assaulted.

The Personnel Committee has worked diligently with me during these two weeks to see if there is any way to bring a positive resolution to this crisis. They have a good picture of the staff situation and have sought to understand what they can about the charges. It would appear, at this point, that the total problem centers in the person of the pastor, who, in the future, will be confronted by a well-organized dissident group that has listened to only one side of the issues.

My continued presence would force you, as the congregation, to take sides for or against the pastor. This creates a no-win situation. I will not be a party to such a polarization of the fellowship that we have worked hard as partners to build in this community. I am not afraid of being held accountable for my actions; however, in my opinion, the real issue is not Henry Crouch, but what kind of Baptist church Providence will become. I sense that the time has come for a change of leadership with the hope that it bring to the forefront the real issues and thus a sense of unity.

We love Providence and its people. You have been a part of our lives for 21 years. You have shared our problems, griefs, pains and joys. You have been faithful, generous and gracious. My father and mother, nephews, and families are members here. Our family has tried to live before you lives of integrity. They are here with me today to support me in this decision. Jan and I are disappointed but have no animosity nor will we hold resentment. We just feel you need to know "what" and "why" this is happening to

your pastor. No deals have been made – no vote is being taken. We come to this moment feeling this is God's will for us.

We had hoped to celebrate our 25th anniversary and retire with joy and satisfaction in four years. So it is not our timing that brings our ministry among you to a sudden closure. It is our hope that our departure will bring healing, and spiritual growth. We leave tangible evidence of God's blessing on our ministry in your midst and believe that the future will prove our integrity and sense of call. Pray for Jan and me as we begin a new Adventure of Faith, yet unknown to us.

God brought us together – let us believe that God will bless us in our departure.

I hereby resign as your pastor – get on with your task of being a real church!

Sincerely,

Wm. Henry Crouch

In a called deacons meeting on August 27, 1989, following Pastor Crouch's resignation, a motion was approved electing Rev. Bill Andrews as Interim Pastor until a replacement could be found. In addition, a resolution was passed affirming Henry Crouch and his family for their work and ministry to Providence Baptist Church over the last 21 years; affirming Rev. Bill Andrews in his new position as Interim Pastor; and affirming all the church staff. The meeting was adjourned with the singing of "We Are One In The Bond Of Love."

In the August 28, 1989 ***InReach***, the church staff responded as follows to the breaking series of events:

When strong winds blow, foundations are tested.....Bear with us, and pray with us as we experience together the multi-faceted emotions related to the recent storm that caught most of us by surprise. A forthcoming communication will attempt to help us recover our equilibrium and deal realistically with the aftermath of the storm.

The September 4 ***InReach*** announced the resignations of Minister with Children Sue Deaton effective October 1, 1989, and

Associate Pastor Lee McDonald effective October 31. The same *InReach* also welcomed two new staff members: First, Dr. John Blizzard as Interim Minister of Music. He was a Providence member and had led worship services several times during the summer. Second, Debbie Carter, also a Providence member, became Secretary to the Youth and Activities Ministries.

Providence hosted the Regional Habitat for Humanity Meeting on September 8-9, which included a banquet for Habitat workers. The Sanctuary Choir sang for the banquet service, and Aubrey Arant coordinated the activities for Providence. Sunday, September 10, 1989, was International Day of Prayer and Action for Human Habitat. The guest speaker was Millard Fuller, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity, who spoke at both morning services.

In the September 11, 1989 *InReach*, Rev. Bill Andrews reported that Rev. William Treadwell had been invited by the staff and deacons, due to his expertise and experience in dealing with the pain of conflict in the local church, to recommend some guidelines/principles to help the church deal with the crisis. Dr. Treadwell's recommendations were:

1. Select a management group for this crisis time that is not identified with the crisis (possibly the deacons, administrative deacons) and declare this a spiritual issue.
2. Try to use no controversial groups or individuals to report or to preside for the next six to nine months.
3. Discourage all ad hoc meetings.
4. Make absolutely sure there are no surprises anymore! Keep people informed.
5. Do not vote on anything you don't have to for the next six months.
6. Suggest using small groups, manned by well-trained listeners from the outside, to interview people and put one official story together as to what really happened.

The Deacon Board met on September 17 and elected a Deacon Management Group to work with the staff and the church membership during the crisis time. The Management Group, composed of former deacon chairs who were then active deacons, were:

Bill Caldwell, Chair
 Frank Litaker
 Wylie Berry
 Ben Rentz

Clarence Adams
 Rod Coward
 Sam Rutland

Their charge from the Deacon Board was to locate and recommend to the church a Conflict Management Listening Group to help work through the problems, see that the regular programs and activities of the church continued, report regularly to the deacons, serve as advisors to the church staff, try to resolve conflicts within the membership, and communicate regularly to the church through the *InReach*.

The September 18 *InReach* announced two support staff resignations: Debbie Miller, Children's Ministry Secretary for 3-1/2 years, effective September 15; Jane Crutchfield, Publications/Music Ministry Secretary since May and prior to that Secretary for Youth and Activities Ministries, effective September 28.

At a called business meeting on Sunday, September 24, the church approved the following:

1. Accepted the resignations of Sue Deaton, Eddie Lockamy and Lee McDonald.
2. Rejected the resignation of Henry Crouch and recalled him as Pastor.
3. Established a love offering for each of the resigned ministers, along with a severance package for Lee McDonald.
4. Affirmed John Blizzard as Interim Minister of Music.

In the October 2, 1989 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

My call to the ministry was definite and traumatic! My selection of a mate was just as sure and positive. My call to Providence was clear. The decision to move to Charlotte had many problems, but we knew it was God's Will. He has blessed our ministry together in many ways. The events of the past month have been frustrating and confusing. Mixed signals, caused by an impetuous nature, sometimes outruns the still small voice of God. It feels good being back in the pulpit! Once again, the sense of being back in the center of His Will is clear. I do not take lightly the second chance and

humbly ask for your support as we continue the Adventure in Faith together.

Amazingly, during the intense conflict, the regular Providence ministry continued to function efficiently based upon the published agendas. For example, on September 17, the Metropolitan Music Ministries presented a concert of sacred music featuring the choirs of Providence Baptist, Holy Comforter Episcopal, Mt. Carmel Baptist, the Liturgical Dance Choir of St. Andrews United Methodist, along with string and brass ensembles, organ, harpsichord, and soloists. Providence's Dr. Martha Iley was President of the Metropolitan Ministries. A reception followed the concert.

On October 2, Wendell Sloan, Church Administrator, announced: *The Dorsey bus is here! It will be a real addition to our ministry opportunities. The bus is to be a memorial to the late J. E. and Roxie Dorsey, who left an endowment for the church in their wills. We hope to offer service for senior citizens in the neighborhood housing apartments. We need qualified volunteer drivers to make this ministry work.*

At the October 8 business meeting, the church approved the recommendation of the Deacon Body that: Providence Baptist Church explore entering into a contract with Dr. George Bullard for the purpose of identifying problems within our staff and congregation, developing solutions to these problems, and assisting in the implementation of the solutions.

The October 9, 1989, **InReach** announced that: *Randy and Cynthia Lail had been enlisted by the Stewardship Committee to lead the special Stewardship Emphasis to underwrite the cost of our church programs and ministries for 1990. The theme would be 'Focus On Christ!' The emphasis would be placed on the individual steward focusing on Christ and responding as God has prospered.*

The October 9 **InReach** also carried the announcement that Rev. Steve Smith had accepted the call to become Pastor of the Homestead Heights Baptist Church in Durham. He had returned from the Trinity Baptist Church in The Hague.

The October 1989 Uniform Church Letter to the Mecklenburg Baptist Association covering October 1, 1988-September 30, 1989,

reported the following summary for the church year:

2,375 Total Church Membership
 1,733 Sunday School Enrollment
 333 WMU Enrollment
 870 Church Training Enrollment

In called conference on Sunday, October 29, 1989, the church voted to approve a covenant between Dr. George Bullard, Conflict Management Consultant, and Providence Baptist Church. The covenant outlined the purpose and goals of the relationship, the process involved, the expectations of the congregation and the Consultant, and the financial arrangements. A Steering Committee of 15 was approved to work with Dr. Bullard in promoting the process.

Clarence Adams	Tom Philson
Christine Beaman	Earl Pope
Wylie Berry	Ben Rentz
Bill Caldwell, Chair	Wes Rundquist
Rod Coward	Sam Rutland
Drag Kimrey	Maude Sudderth
Frank Litaker	Debra Wallace
Henry Crouch, Pastor	

All of the November 1989 vesper hour services focused upon Foreign Missions and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Dr. and Mrs. Bill McCall, Southern Baptist Convention missionaries to Togo, Africa, taught in the Lome Seminary and shared the important use of the new chapel on campus. The chapel was built with funds from Providence; First Baptist, Charlotte; and First Baptist, Asheville. Pastor Crouch, Tom Baker, George and Mary Ann Crouch and several others shared their talents in the project. On November 12, Joe Blanton and Jewel Smith gave a concert in the sanctuary. Rev. Blanton had just returned from a mission assignment in Brazil. On November 19, Mr. and Mrs. Alex P. Koval taught a Foreign Mission Study. They had served as missionaries to Russian Jews in Jerusalem and had smuggled Bibles into Russia. On November 26, the speaker was Pastor Salvador Negrin and his Spanish congregation. He spoke through an interpreter, and the music was provided by a Spanish Choir.

The October 30, 1989, *InReach* announced the beginning of a

new mission church that would be using Providence's Chapel on Sunday afternoons, beginning November 5. The Black congregation, Doers of the Word, was a member of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association, and their Pastor was Johnny Wallace.

Due to the crisis situation, the church in late October 1989 approved the Stewardship Committee's plan to delay voting on a specific budget for 1990 until the January quarterly business meeting. The committee felt the commitment should be devoted to giving in November and based on the commitments, develop and present an actual budget for 1990 in January.

In the November 13 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced:

Victory Sunday! November 19 will be a big day for us. We will seek to have all commitment cards returned in support of the 1990 budget. Our FIRST GOAL is to FOCUS ON CHRIST and the resources given to each of us as believers. Our SECOND GOAL is to WORK TOGETHER AS A FAMILY by cooperating with the stewardship. Our THIRD GOAL is to PLEDGE SUFFICIENT FUNDS to cover our needs for 1990. We need EVERY PERSON for commitment to Christ, to work together as a family, and to pledge financial support for our ongoing ministry.

On November 20, it was announced that pledges had been returned totaling \$1,427,000.

On December 1, 1989, the WMU hosted a World Missions Banquet. Attendees were given the opportunity to dine with fellow Baptists from Romania, Korea, Iran, China and Singapore. At the banquet, Rod Coward announced a new mission trip to Poland that would be responsible for constructing living quarters for a new Baptist Seminary in Warsaw. Skilled and unskilled labor was needed for the project between April and October 1990.

December 1989 was a busy month at Providence. The first three weekends were filled with listening sessions with expert counselors to help members understand the situation in the church. Next came the Advent Season services, followed by the December 10 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering Service featuring Dr. Don Kammerdiener, Executive Vice-President of the Foreign Mission Board.

Wednesday, December 13, was Christmas at Providence, highlighted by the musical "The Perfect Gift" presented by the Young Musicians and Children's Handbell Choirs. This was followed on December 17 by a concert featuring the Ladies Handbell Choir and the Sanctuary Choir. The day closed with the annual Candlelight Service and concert, "Joy to the World," presented by the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra.

Sunday, December 24, closed the Advent Season. At the vesper hour, the Christmas Eve Service was led by families and ministers. The special music was by Sarah Watson and the Sanctuary Choir.

The December 18, 1989 *InReach* announced, through the Steering Committee, that the Listening Sessions had been completed:

Now begins the difficult work of analyzing the information gained, developing recommendations and preparing a report. Given the strong feelings and attitudes within our congregation and the complexity of our situation, Dr. Bullard's task is humanly impossible. Do we honestly expect him to solve our problems, heal our wounds, and put our focus back where it should be? Do we dare to believe that Providence Baptist can be whole again? Please join us in praying for the success of Dr. Bullard's work in the coming weeks. Such prayers may be the best gift you offer this Christmas.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1989, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary in Residence and Interim Pastor

Dr. Linda Bridges, Professor, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia

Dr. Jay Casey, Pastor, Lake Norman Baptist Church

Dr. Bill Crouch, Vice-President, Carson-Newman College, Tennessee

Rev. Sue Deaton, Minister with Children

Mr. Millard Fuller, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity

Rev. Tommy Hall, Minister with Youth

Mr. Bill Johnson, Baptist Layman

Dr. Don Kammerdiener, Executive Vice-President, Foreign Mission Board

Rev. Dean Kaufman, Metro Baptist Association, New York City

Rev. Dennis Kirkley, Missionary to Indonesia on Furlough

Rev. Alex Koval, Southern Baptist Convention Missionary to Israel

Dr. Bill McCall, Southern Baptist Convention Missionary to Togo, Africa

Rev. Lee McDonald, Associate Pastor

Rev. Mack McGinnis, Pastor, 36th Street Baptist Church

Rev. Salvador Negrin, Spanish Church Pastor

Dr. Alan Neely, Princeton Theological Seminary, NJ

Rev. Tom O'Neal, Mecklenburg Baptist Association Counselor

Dr. Keithen Tucker, Pastor, First Baptist, Washington, NC

Ms. Carolyn Weatherford, Executive Director, Southern Baptist Convention WMU

Rev. Dennis Whitaker, Charlotte Police Chaplain



Chapter 5

The 1990s

In 1990 Charlotte's population was 400,000, with Mecklenburg County's surpassing 520,000. The area's rapid population growth during the 1990s, by using the federal government's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) index, rose to nearly two million persons for the 50-mile radius surrounding Charlotte. This population increase helped to raise the area's visibility as being a center for banking, manufacturing, trade and cultural attractions.

Much of Charlotte's rapid growth and expansion during the 1990s was due to a positive working relationship between local government, higher education institutions and the business community. The revitalization of the center city continued with movement up North Tryon and out West Trade Streets. There was also the effort to revitalize the South End area along South Boulevard, especially the Trolley Line connecting South End to the new Convention Center on College Street.

The three most noticeable additions to the center city were the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center (1992) beside the Bank of America Tower, the two First Union Towers, and the Panthers Stadium (Ericsson) where Jerry Richardson's Carolina Panthers began NFL play in 1995. There was also the new Transit Building for city bus (CATS) connections.

A new runway was also opened at Douglas International Airport, which had grown to become the eighth busiest airport in the nation due to US Airways and its Hub System. A big factor in the airport's growth was new international flights to London and Germany. Much of the increased airport traffic was due to business and tourist connections.

From a religious perspective in the 1990s, Charlotte was continuing to witness the movement of churches to the heavily populated areas outside the city. Center city churches were beginning to lose increasing numbers of members to outlying “mega” churches like Carmel, Calvary and Hickory Grove Baptist. Especially hard hit were churches such as Pritchard Memorial, First United Methodist and even First Baptist. Televangelists like Jim Bakker also faced difficult times. Bakker and PTL were sued and convicted of defrauding hundreds of members, and he would spend several years in jail and PTL would close its doors.

In the January 2, 1990 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

We welcome 1990 as a year with opportunities yet unmet! These will either stretch our lives to new dimensions, or if ignored and evaded, pass life by, leaving it to grow stale and selfish.....Early in the year, we will hear from the conflict counselors as they diagnose our situation at Providence. Hopefully, they will give us guidance and help us start a new dream with unity of spirit. We will chart a new course and seek to become the church God wants us to be in Charlotte.

The same *InReach* announced that former Associate Pastor Dr. Randy Robinson had accepted the call from Millbrook Baptist in Raleigh. He had been Pastor of Memorial Baptist Church of Arlington, Virginia, since leaving Providence.

Most of January was filled with forums to discuss the 1990 church budget, working with Dr. George Bullard on the Conflict Management Project, and preparations for the February Winter Bible Study. Dr. Bullard was scheduled to present his recommendations at a called church conference on January 14, but it was delayed until February 4, and finally held on Sunday, February 10.

The annual Winter Bible Study was held February 5-7, 1990, with guest teacher Dr. G. Byrns Coleman, who taught a study of Corinthians. Dr. Coleman was Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Wingate College. This was followed by the WMU Focus Week February 11-17, 1990, with the theme, “There’s A Place For You!” The guest speaker was Carolyn Byrd, Trustee of the Home Mission Board and State WMU Consultant.

At the February 11 quarterly business meeting, Providence extended a call to Rev. Tommy Hall to become Associate Pastor.

They also approved a 1990 budget of \$1,522,000. However, much of the session was spent discussing Dr. George Bullard's Conflict Management Report and approving the following three items from the report, popularly known as "The White Paper Report:"

ITEM 3: Henry Crouch, Ed Haire, Bart Hodges, Earl Pope, Bill Caldwell and Clarence Adams should spend a full 24 hours together in a retreat setting some time during the next 30 days, or as soon as possible, to identify issues which divide them and issues which unite them, lay out a consensus plan for handling the dividing issues. An oral and written report of the progress made at this retreat, and the plan for handling the identified issues should be given to the full Steering Committee, and by the Steering Committee to the Church.

ITEM 8: The Conflict Management Steering Committee needs to remain active for about one more year in order to correlate the action which needs to take place during the implementation phase. Each member of the Steering Committee needs to demonstrate their personal commitment to the future of Providence by agreeing not to be involved in any activity that aggravates or perpetuates the existing conflict. Each member of the Committee should, with integrity, attend worship and educational services and business meetings whenever possible and support the Church by giving of their money and time to assure its success. An agreement to cease involvement in any conflict activities means to not participate in meetings of ad hoc groups, send or request communication which continues the conflict, and seek to encourage all around them to work toward a positive future for the church. Further, each member of the Steering Committee as a symbol of trust for each other, and as a commitment to a new, positive, spiritual direction should agree to package and seal all communications, documents and/or tapes which they have concerning the conflict, and deliver them to the original deacon management group for safe, secure storage for up to two years. This deacon management group at the end of this time is free to return to each person the package they received from them. Any

members of the Steering Committee who cannot commit to those requirements should, with integrity and honor, remove themselves from the Committee.

ITEM 12: Concerning staff changes/staff vacancies approved in principle and referred to the Personnel Committee for recommendations, as follows:

1. Tommy Hall called as Associate Pastor.
2. Search Committees empowered to begin search for three staff positions: Minister of Youth, Minister with Children and Minister of Music.

It would be soothing to say that Dr. George Bullard's listening groups, Conflict Management Sessions and the above church approved ITEMS helped return Providence to a state of normalcy. However, the truth is that the backbiting and hard feelings would continue until Henry Crouch had been forced into exile as a fundraiser for the new Baptist Seminary in Richmond.

The February 11, 1990, *InReach* announced that Edna Mae Fisher had completed two years as Providence's Music Associate. She had been very helpful to Interim Music Minister, Dr. John Blizzard, in continuing the effective church Music Ministry.

In the February 19, 1990 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated: *We have heard much of staff dissension since summer. It is only fair now to report that the Providence staff is 'united' and enjoys good relationships with each other.....My report to you at the end of February is that our staff is in good spirits.*

March 1990 was a busy month. It began with the Week of Prayer for Home Missions with the theme, "I Will Tell The Good News." The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering national goal was \$41,000,000 with the Providence goal set at \$11,000. Youth Week was March 11-18, with the youth leading the Sunday School and worship services. The youth speakers were Will Caldwell, Missy Pemberton and Greg Mulzet. The highlight of the week was the Youth Choir's presentation of "Say Yes."

March 18 was Special Education Sunday. The focus of this ministry was the Special Education Sunday School class members, their families and their teachers.

The March "big" event was the March 30-April 1 spring revival which was preceded by prayer groups and community visitation.

The guest revivalist was Dr. Jerry Hayner, Pastor of Forest Hills Baptist Church of Raleigh.

In the March 12, 1990 *InReach*, as recommended by the Consultant's Report, Pastor Crouch discussed the subject of his retirement as follows:

It has been my plan all along to follow the normal procedure of retiring at 65.....It has been a long-time hope that the Lord willing and health permitting that I could finish 25 years as pastor of this church.....To satisfy both my birthday and the anniversary, it appears now that September 30, 1993, will be my retirement date.

In early April 1990, Pastor Crouch wrote a series of columns in *InReach* about the takeover of Southeastern Seminary by the fundamentalists and the beginning of a new seminary in Richmond: *The new seminary will be a joint venture with the Blacks and including students from the North and South. It has to be 'inclusive' of race and gender and ecumenical in its scope. Scholastic excellence and a 'hands-on' type of ministry will be emphasized. It will be distinctively Baptist in its approach.* There will be much more to say about Pastor Crouch and the Richmond Seminary.

The April 9 *InReach* announced the resignation of Starr Moore of the support staff. Starr had been at Providence 4-1/2 years working in many areas, most recently as Secretary to the Children and Youth Ministries. She would be missed.

The April 30, 1990, *InReach* announced that Tommy Justus, a prospective Youth Minister, would be at Providence on May 6. At the time, Tommy was the Youth Minister at Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, and was also working toward a Master of Divinity Degree at Southern Seminary. On Sunday, May 13, 1990, the church in a called business meeting voted to extend a call to Tommy as Youth Minister.

Two new secretaries began work in mid-April 1990. Linda Burris was the new Secretary for the Children and Youth Ministries, replacing Starr Moore. Lori Leroy became the Publications/Music Secretary, replacing Deborah Griffin.

Sunday, May 20, 1990, was Providence's 36th Anniversary with one morning service, followed by dinner-on-the-grounds at the

pavilion. Former members, former staff members and all living charter members were invited. A good time was had by all.

May 27, 1990, was Baccalaureate Day to honor the graduating seniors. In the May 21 *InReach*, Tommy Hall said:

The Youth Ministry of Providence has ascended to incredible heights. A major reason for this is the 'Class of 1990.' Their spiritual maturity has fulfilled the words of Paul, 'Let no one look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.' Thank you, graduates, for the example you have set that will affect lives for generations to come.

June 1990 could be called music month, beginning on June 3 with a mini-concert at both morning worship services by the Bison Glee Club from Oklahoma Baptist University. The club consisted of 28 very talented young musicians. This was followed on June 15 by a George Hamilton, IV Concert. George was Providence's International Ambassador of Country Music and did a marvelous job. Next, on June 17, Edna Mae Fisher, Providence's Organist/Music Associate, gave a concert during the evening vesper hour. She had submitted her resignation, effective July 1, to move to Knoxville, Tennessee, with husband Ken.

The May 28, 1990, *InReach* announced that Tommy Justus, the new Youth Minister, would arrive on June 3. The same *InReach* also announced that Jim West, a rising junior at Wake Forest University, would be the Summer Youth Associate. Jim, who grew up in the Providence Youth Ministry program, would serve as an Assistant to the Youth Minister and ensure a full program would operate while the Youth Minister was on the Mission Trip and Centrifuge.

Prior to leaving for the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans (June 12-14, 1990), Pastor Crouch stated:

We will elect new trustees for our institutions and vote on our representatives as lobbyists in Washington. The majority is ruling with strength and power and would have all of us become alike. The minority (about 49%) continues to support the denomination, in spite of the exclusion from all decision-making. The minority carries the denomina-

tion's ministry and mission program with their gifts to the Cooperative Program. Many of the majority group give very little, some as low as 1% of their budgets.....Pray for the Convention.

The June 11, 1990, **InReach** announced two staff anniversaries. Sarah Watson had completed seven years as Receptionist, and Wendell Sloan was completing nine years as Business Administrator.

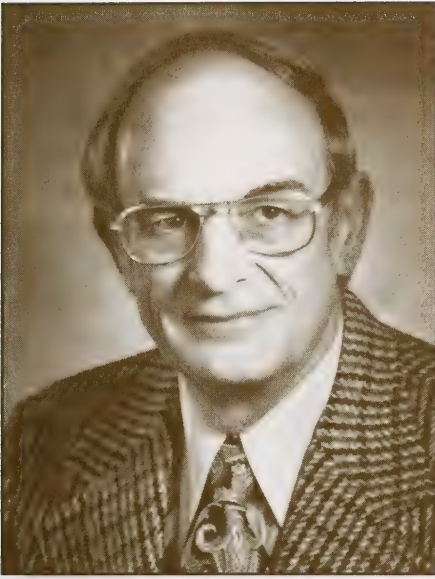
In the June 18 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch gave his feelings on the recently adjourned Southern Baptist Convention: *I felt like a stranger in my own house in New Orleans. It is no longer 'home' for me and I have attended my last Southern Baptist Convention. There are other things I can be involved in that will enhance the Lord's work.*

Ann Charles-Craft, a prospective Minister with Children, visited Providence on June 24, 1990. She was serving as the Minister to Children and Single Adults at Trinity Baptist Church in Raleigh. Ann was a graduate of UNC-G (B.S. and M.Ed.) and also had a Master of Divinity Degree from Southeastern Seminary. She began her duties at Providence on August 13, 1990.

On Sunday evening, June 25, there was a Richmond Seminary Dinner at Providence. The theological crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention had created a real need for a place to educate future Baptist ministers. The Southern Baptist Alliance had opened a theological school in Virginia, the Baptist Seminary of Richmond. The dinner at Providence was to inform and solicit financial support for the new seminary. Dr. Alan Neely, from Princeton Theological Seminary, was the featured speaker.

The June 25 **InReach** welcomed Mary Jacque Coble as Providence's new Director of the Weekday Program. She was a graduate of Meredith College with a major in Child Development Education and Home Economics. For seven years she had been a teacher and director of the Children's Program at SAS Institute in Raleigh.

The same **InReach** also carried a thank you message from recently resigned Music Associate Edna Mae Fisher: *Thank you for your gift of the lovely pewter candlesticks and your many expressions of love and good wishes as we move to Knoxville. My*



Gordon Weekley
1955-1967



W. Henry Crouch
1968-1991



Charles B. Bugg
1993-1996



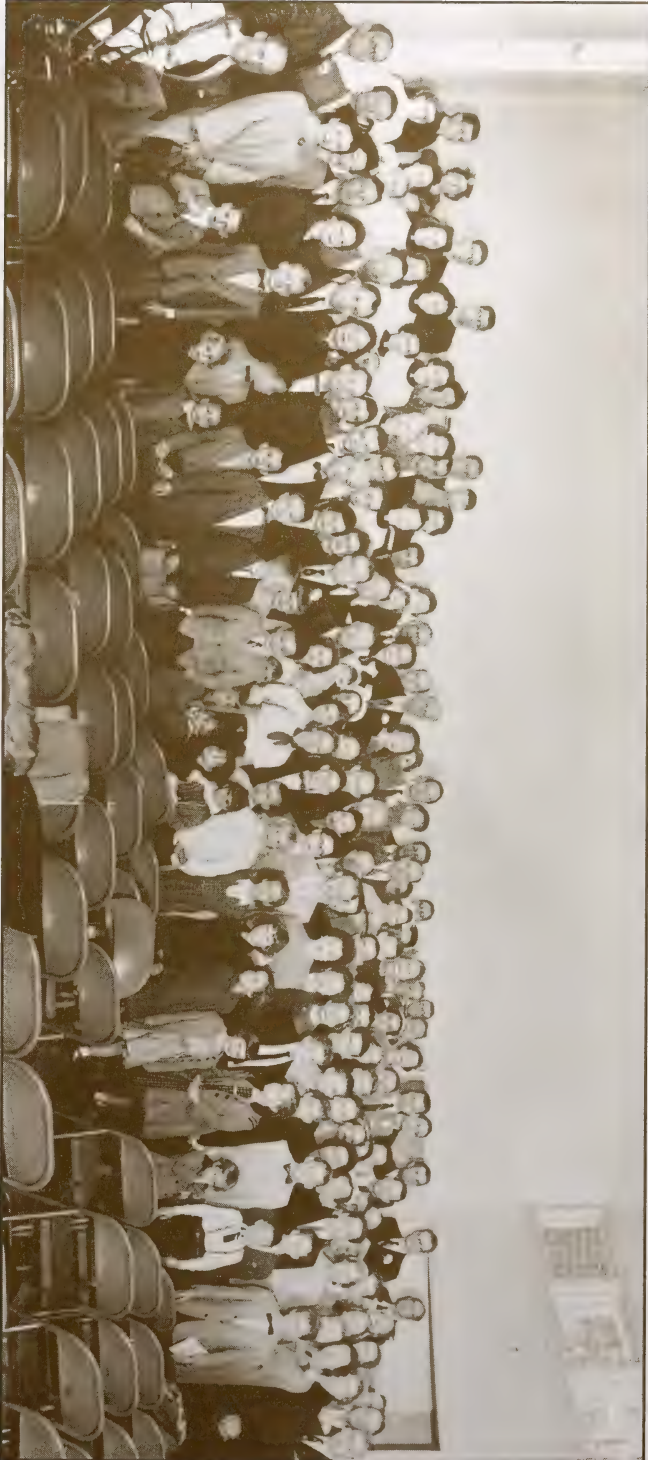
Al Cadenhead
1998-2004



The First Building--“The Hut”--1953



The First Sanctuary--1955



Congregation at 1955 Fellowship Building Dedication



May 18, 1958, First Sanctuary Building Ground Breaking



May 24, 1959 First Sanctuary Building Dedication



Choir--First Sanctuary



June 15, 1969 Fellowship Building Ground Breaking



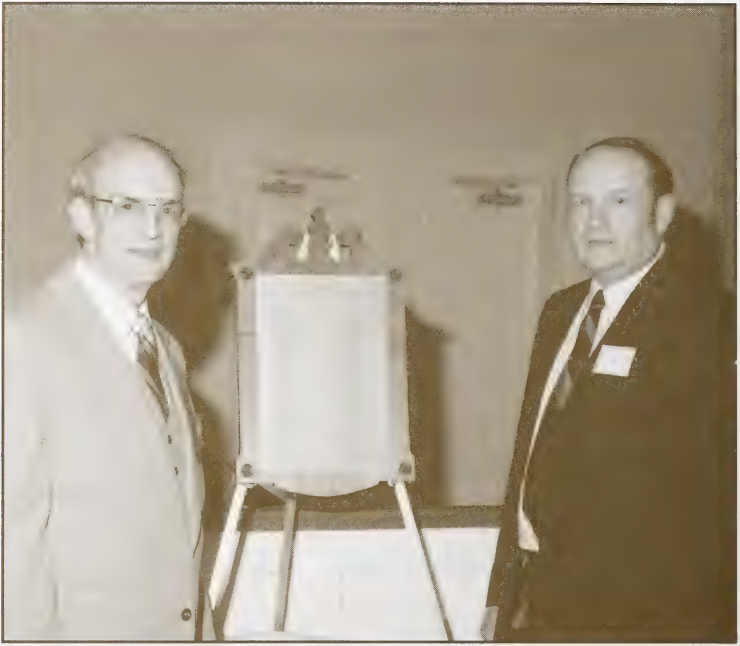
March 28, 1976 Present Sanctuary Ground Breaking



Memory Garden--2001



Columbarium--2001



**Gordon Weekley and Henry Crouch
with Charter Members Plaque**



May 17, 1987 Gordon Weekley Chapel Dedication



W. Perry Crouch and Henry Crouch--1978



1979 25th Anniversary Charter Members



1987 Habitat Dinner with Carters and Crouchs



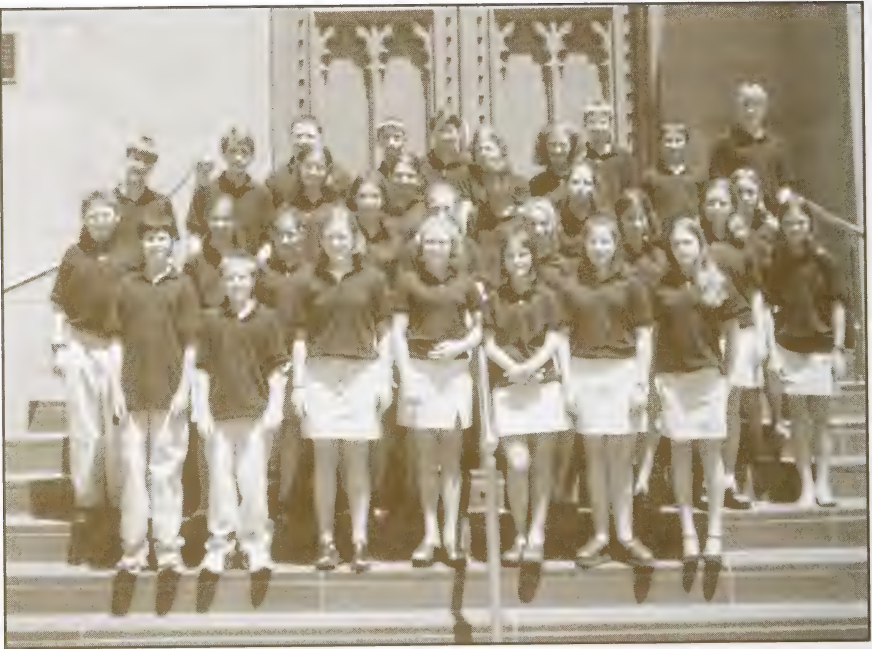
**Four Pastors: Frank Moore, Henry Crouch, Gordon Weekley,
and Chuck Bugg at 1994 40th Anniversary Celebration**



1998 Ladies Handbell Choir



Adult Senior Choir



Middle School Choir on Tour



High School Choir on Tour



**Frank
Litaker and
Bill
Andrews
place Kitty
Crouch
Plaque on
Camp
Mundo
Vista Cabin**



George Crouch on Ghana Mission Trip



Church Members Put Finishing Touches On Habitat House



Sanctuary 2000 Snow Day



Randy Ballard and Youth in Activities Center



**Bo Prosser and Doug Haney Entertaining
in the Fellowship Hall**



working and serving with you has been my greatest privilege. It has truly been a joy to share God's love through music with you.

In the June 25 ***InReach***, Pastor Crouch made his strongest argument concerning the Southern Baptist conflict:

Most people feel it's a 'preachers' fight and the denomination will right itself. Observers at the Convention testify to a different reality. Lay people from all over North Carolina were shocked to experience the irregularities and the control exercised by the leadership.

Baptists have never been alike. Visit the different churches that belong to our denomination in any town and you will discover individual personalities.....All belong to the same Convention, but worship style, organization, and emphases remain different. We choose a local church that best fits our personality and worship style. It's great to have a choice and to find a family fellowship that best suits our personal needs. Each church is autonomous and free to choose staff, programs, budget, and emphases. We even interpret the Scriptures with our own flavor and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The 'new' book is not appealing to me as a preacher or as a Baptist. I don't want to be forced to accept any creed other than the New Testament. I don't want to have to study literature that presents a fundamentalist's theology. I don't want worship to become Pentecostal and 'show-time.'

My denomination has turned back the clock and is fighting change. I want to move to the 21st Century and not back to the 19th!

Due to the increased concern over the Southern Baptist Convention and the recent trends, Pastor Crouch led discussions on the Southern Baptist Convention during July prayer meetings. His topics were: *Early Beginnings of Our Heritage*, *the Golden Years—The Building of a Denomination*, and *The Fragmentation—the Controversy and the Split*. He used Dr. Bill Leonard's new book, ***God's Last and Only Hope***, as the study guide. Dr. Leonard, at the time, was a professor at Southern Seminary and a church historian.

The annual Youth Mission Trip was to New York City July 13-17, 1990, consisting of 37 youth and adult leaders. While in New

York City, they conducted Backyard Bible Clubs and gave concerts, led by the new Minister with Youth, Tommy Justus.

On July 1, 1990, Mattie Lou Edwards celebrated her fifth anniversary, after faithfully and cheerfully serving as Food Service Director.

In the July 9 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch continued his efforts to educate and inform the congregation about the Baptist crisis:

We have tried to keep your leadership informed with articles and editorials. Unlike other churches, Providence has supplied leadership and resources to aid the struggle for a free convention. The Southern Baptist Alliance was born in our Conference Room and the Pastor served as the first leader. The first two years of its operation, leaders from all over the convention became familiar with our facilities.

On July 22, 1990, the Music Ministry sponsored a mini-concert. The guest musicians were Kelly Black (soprano) and Polly Bostic (piano).

Pastor Crouch vacationed at Lake Lure during August 1990. In his absence, Tommy Hall; Tommy Justus; Dr. Stan Hastey, Executive Director of the Southern Baptist Alliance; and Dr. Alan Neely, Professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, filled the pulpit.

The August 13, 1990, *InReach* announced that Regina M. Graham had been called as Interim Music Associate/Organist. She came from Unity Presbyterian Church in Fort Mill, where she served as Organist and Director of Music, leading a program of adult, children's and handbell choirs.

During the August 26, 1990 vesper hour, the Music Ministry presented a concert by Sibyl Turman, a Charlotte resident and student at Johnson C. Smith University. In addition, she was a member of the Charlotte Choral Society. From 1986-1990, she toured the East Coast singing gospel and praises of Jesus Christ as a contemporary gospel vocalist.

At the WMU meeting on September 4, Mary Ann Crouch shared her mission trip experiences to the Ivory Coast. This was followed on September 14 by the Better Homes Club Dinner with featured guest Sara James, WBTV News Co-anchor, speaking on

“Family Issues in the News.” Entertainment was provided by Jennifer Carter, who acted out a “Night on the Town.”

In the September *InReach*, Bobby Butler welcomed Liz McPhail as Secretary to the Activities Ministry. Liz would coordinate the volunteers, help with scheduling the building and work with the Senior Adult and Singles Ministries.

The major September event was the Week of Prayer for State Missions with the theme, “Changing Lives Through State Missions.” The State Mission offering goal was \$1,800,000 with the Providence goal being \$2,000.

As the old church year drew to a close and the new one approached, Pastor Crouch stated:

The secret to a meaningful church experience is the involvement of its members. There is something for everyone at Providence! We provide the facilities, the staff, the materials, and offer opportunities for service. The individual must respond. Let me encourage each of you to make the resolution and effort to be a part of our fall program. Spiritual growth is something we experience as we participate. Find your place and make a real commitment to be present and involved. So we need you! You are important to us! Your participation and involvement make our partnership a real Adventure in Faith!

September 1990 brought two staff anniversaries. Tommy Hall, Associate Pastor, celebrated seven years, and John Blizzard, Interim Music Minister, celebrated one year.

In the September 17, 1990 *InReach*, the Poland Partnership Team of Rod Coward, Chip Kissiah and Rip Clardy gave a summary of their volunteer mission project:

Your Poland Partnership Team has returned thankful for your prayers and concerns. Providence Baptist Church, through the auspices of the Missions Committee, provided some funds for us to use as needs dictated. Several Sunday School classes and individuals also provided funds for this purpose. Part of those funds were used to provide a salary supplement, through North Carolina Baptist Men, to help secure services of another translator. A support gift was

also provided to a young Polish worker who left the project to go into full-time evangelism with Operation Mobilization. A similar gift was made to an on-site Moldavian family to help defray extra costs of open heart surgery for the husband. The fund also provided one-third of the cost of a construction lift for our building to raise concrete and bricks to the upper levels. The other two-thirds of the cost was secured from other sources at the same time to assure the lift could be installed immediately. The remainder of the funds was applied to the purchase of Polish-English Bibles for distribution through Baptist churches throughout Poland. These parallel editions contain New Testament and Psalms and are in great demand for use in teaching new Christians how to read English while they study the Scriptures. We are not likely to ever see the end of the work your donations have started. Thank you sincerely.

A note of thanks was in the same **InReach** for Dr. Martha Iley, President of the Metropolitan Music Ministries, for the beautiful and meaningful service of sacred music they had presented on September 16. Martha was one of the founders of the Ministries, which sought to share music in the Charlotte community.

The September 24, 1990, **InReach** announced that Sam Rutland had been chosen as Deacon Chair for 1990-1991. Sam had been a member at Providence since 1968 and had served as Deacon Chair, Sunday School Teacher, Administrative Deacon Chair, and on many church committees. The church also approved electing Barton Hodges as Deacon Emeritus posthumously.

Clarence Adams, 1989-1990 Deacon Chair, attended the Consultation of Concerned Baptists Meeting in Atlanta August 23-25 and gave his observations of the meeting in the September 24 **InReach**:

1. A strong feeling existed that it is time for churches to begin focusing their attention on ways to ensure that funds reach the programs they want to support and also look for new opportunities for funding.
2. Not a lot of support was demonstrated for churches to leave the SBC at this time, but all churches were encouraged to monitor SBC proceedings more closely.

3. Churches were encouraged to use SBC programs as funding vehicles where they meet the local church's needs.
4. Any new structure that may be developed must have built-in safeguards to prevent control by a few people.
5. Any new structures must have room for both men and women, black and white, as well as ethnic groups, young and old, and must include social ministries, as well as theological ministries.
6. A new structure must have room for differences between churches located in all geographical areas.
7. A new structure must not become an end unto itself, but a mechanism to more effectively accomplish God's work in this world.

As a result of the above proceedings, the Deacon Board named 13 deacons to serve on a Denominational Issues Committee chaired by Drag Kimrey. The committee's charge was to keep abreast of the proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention to keep both the Deacon Body and the church informed as to these proceedings and to make recommendations, as appropriate to both the Deacon Body and the church on any actions and directions that should be considered by Providence Baptist Church.

The above steps and future meetings eventually led to the founding of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Providence played an important role in this process.

On October 1, 1990, Henry Crouch began his twenty-third year as pastor. As he stated in the October 1 ***InReach***:

For the 23rd time, I will use the subject 'Adventures in Faith' as my anniversary theme. This is my best description for the pilgrimage we share as pastor and congregation. We have a number of things to be accomplished in this pilgrimage. We need to complete our ministerial staff. Our Constitution needs to be studied for possible changes. Our 1991 planned budget has an increase of 13%, with other needs as a challenge to our stewardship. We need to be responsible with a spiritual commitment to do our part.

In the October 8, 1990 ***InReach***, in a rather creative way, Rev. Bill Andrews announced his departure as Missionary in Residence:

THANK YOU FOR ASKING. Now you know. Yes! My name has been excluded from the 1991 budget. By whom? By me. Why?

By love compelled. By the same love that we have experienced here – love that invited us to share in the ministry potential of this great church for almost three years after retiring from missionary responsibilities in Chile – HIS LOVE.

Stewardship of privilege: Good health, the warm support of the Providence staff, leaders and church family and a call to return to Chile (before the bones refuse to respond and the tongue rebels).....to share in the ministry potential of an isolated area there – for four or five months. HIS CALL.

Assurance: That the love that binds us in a common ministry – whether here or there – will let us go without turning loose. HIS ASSURANCE.

But not yet – next year. ‘Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.’

Thank you for your understanding grace.

Bill Andrews

On Saturday, October 27, Providence held its second Fall Festival with the theme, “Something For All Ages.” It was a fun day of games and fellowship. At a called business meeting on Sunday, October 28, the congregation approved the 1991 budget of \$1.7 million. They also received a summary of the 1989-1990 Associational Letter showing a total membership of 2,390.

In the October 15, 1990 *InReach*, Bobby Butler announced:

What an athlete! Eunice Graham won three gold medals last spring in the local Senior Adult Games and qualified for the State Games. Well, she went, she competed, she won! Eunice hit nine of twelve free throws to win the gold in her age group in the State-wide Senior Adult Games in Raleigh. Now she is getting ready for the Nationals in New York next summer. Way to go, Eunice!

The October 29, 1990, *InReach* announced that Jim and Peggy Morgan would serve as Stewardship Emphasis Chairpersons. The campaign theme was "Focus on Christ," where FOCUS means "Fellowship of Christians Understanding Stewardship." As Pastor Crouch stated: *Stewardship is a matter of faith and response on the part of the disciple.....Let me encourage each of us to increase our faith and our gifts.*

November 1990 was filled with efforts to pledge the 1991 budget, the November 16 Better Homes Club Dinner featuring Ann Charles-Craft and Jennifer Carter, and the November 18 church-wide Foreign Mission Study with the theme, "Crossing Barriers with Love." The study topic was Baptist Ministries in the Arab World.

On Wednesday, November 21, Providence hosted the Community Thanksgiving Service, and the Sanctuary Choir provided the worship music. Following the service, a reception was held. The World Missions Banquet was November 30 with the theme, "Missions Told Like It Is!" The guest speakers were Dr. and Mrs. Bill Skinner, Pioneer Medical Missionaries to Paraguay, who shared their rich experiences from the field.

December 1990 began with the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions with the theme, "Sent to Serve All Nations." Each day the programs focused upon different world geographical areas. Some of the speakers were: Jackie Cromer, Eva Coward, Dorothea Compton, Kitty Crouch and Bill Andrews. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was \$40,000.

The Christmas Season began on December 2 with the first Advent Service, with music provided by the Young Musicians, Adult Handbell Choir and the Sanctuary Choir. On December 5, the Young Musicians Choir presented a concert entitled "The Miracle at the Manger." This was followed on December 9 by the second Advent Service featuring Dr. Louis Cobb and music by the Adult Handbell Choir and the Sanctuary Choir. On December 12, the congregation observed "Christmas at Providence." On December 16 at the third Advent Service, the music was provided by the Adult Handbell Choir and the Sanctuary Choir. That evening the members celebrated with the annual Candlelight Service, with the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra performing "O Magnify the Lord." The fourth Sunday in Advent was observed on December 23, with music provided by

Sarah Watson and the Sanctuary Choir. The final service of the year was the Christmas Eve Service led by the ministers.

During Pastor Crouch's absence in 1990, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bill Andrews, Missionary in Residence
 Mrs. Carolyn Byrd, Trustee, Home Mission Board
 Dr. George Bullard, Conflict Management Consultant
 Dr. Jim Gilland, Pastor, Providence United Methodist
 Rev. Tommy Hall, Associate Pastor
 Dr. Stan Hastey, Executive Dir., Southern Baptist Alliance
 Dr. Jerry Hayner, Pastor, Forest Hills Baptist, Raleigh
 Rev. Tommy Justus, Minister with Youth
 Dr. Alan Neely, Professor, Princeton Theological Seminary
 Dr. Bill Reames (no information on him)
 Mr. Jim West, Summer Youth Associate

January 1991 began with the announcement that Becky Stout would begin work as the Weekday Ministries Associate on January 7. Becky was a graduate of Carson-Newman College (B.A.) and Southwestern Seminary with a Masters Degree in Religious Education. Becky would be responsible for the church weekday programs which were designed to meet the needs of preschoolers and their families in the Charlotte area. She came to Providence from the Greenlawn Baptist Church of Columbia, South Carolina, where she served as Minister of Education.

January 8, 1991, was Mission Action Day. The workday consisted of a wide variety of hands-on projects that would help the needy in the Charlotte community.

In the January 7, 1991 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

Among the many exciting events for 1991, in September, will be the opening of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond. With the changes at Southeastern and Southern Seminaries and the delay of the Divinity School at Wake Forest, this is more of a necessity than most of us in Baptist circles realize. Our future ministers must have the chance for open Biblical study and discover the joy of ecumenical partnership with other Christians. The seminary will be a new concept in theological education and deserves our

support. It is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Alliance..... I am serving on the first development council and we are excited about exceeding our financial drive of \$100,000 in December.

The same **InReach** announced a revised 1991 budget from \$1.7 million to \$1,616,000. Total pledges on January 1, 1991, were only \$1,593,692. In a called business meeting on January 13, the church approved a 1991 budget of \$1,605,000. The congregation also elected Rick Edwards as Church Moderator for 1991. This election was a part of the Conflict Management Resolution Agreement recommended by Dr. George Bullard.

Roberta Teachey started a New Members Sunday School Class in January 1991. Topics included: Scripture, Salvation, the Ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), and the Priesthood of the Believer. This class was not the same as the Orientation Class which was also offered during the Sunday School.

At the January 20 vesper hour, one of the highlights was the Commissioning Service for Bill and Connie Andrews and George and Mary Ann Crouch. Bill and Connie were returning to serve in Chile, and George and Mary Ann Crouch were going to Mali, West Africa.

The annual Winter Bible Study was held February 3-6, 1991. Dr. T. C. Smith, a retired Professor of Greek and New Testament from Southern Seminary and Furman University, taught the book of Acts. He had been at Providence several times, both to preach and teach, and was famous for his wit and humor, as well as his knowledge.

During February and March Sunday evenings, Tommy Hall showed Dr. James Dobson's "Turn Your Heart Toward Home" film series where Dr. Dobson spoke openly about the threats that youth and families face daily. There were some lively discussions following the film showings.

In the February 3 **InReach**, Pastor Crouch congratulated Dr. Tom Graves, Pastor of St. John's Baptist Church, who had recently been elected President of the new Baptist Seminary in Richmond:

The principles of freedom are at stake – free conscience, in a free church, in a free state and the acceptance of women who are called of God to have a place of service in the church.

The muzzling of our denominational president and the control over literature continue to beset us as Baptist people. The demand for creedal conformity for fellowship and participation in denominational affairs has become serious. The decline of cooperation and fellowship among sister churches is of great concern. As Dr. Graves has stated: 'We can no longer trust our denomination to keep alive our cherished Baptist traditions. Each church and each individual need to be informed, and we must take positions as to what kind of Baptists we want to be.'

The Deacon Denominational Committee was busy studying and reporting to the congregation the day-to-day activities of the Southern Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Alliance. Drag Kimrey was chair of the committee.

Fred Kelly assisted in the February 3, 1991, worship services by leading the music. At the time, Fred was Music Ministries Consultant and Special Projects Coordinator at the Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tennessee.

The February 3, 1991, ***InReach*** announced that Jerry M. Johnson would be the Interim Organist. He was a native of Durham and a Duke graduate with a degree in Music History. Jerry's graduate studies were at Winthrop College where he majored in Organ Performance. He came to Providence from St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Charlotte.

The February 3 ***InReach*** also announced that Rod Coward and Chip Kissiah were recruiting volunteers for a new mission project to Poland. This would be a cooperative effort of the Polish Baptist Union and the North Carolina Baptist Men during the summer of 1991 to continue building a dormitory for a seminary near Warsaw. The same ***InReach*** also gave a "special thank you" to Ed Haire for 15 years of service as Church Moderator.

The February 11, 1991, ***Biblical Recorder*** showed that Providence was the fifth largest giver in North Carolina to the Cooperative Program in 1990. Providence gave \$139,215.58 to the Cooperative Program and \$39,308.60 for special offerings for a total of \$178,308.60. However, these figures do not include mission gifts to the Southern Baptist Alliance, the Association, the City, and special projects.

On February 22-23, 1991, Providence hosted the State Handbell Festival which included over 30 groups of handbell ringers and several noted directors. On the afternoon of February 23, the congregation was invited to hear a concert of the combined choirs.

March 3-10, 1991, was Youth Week with the youth teaching Sunday School classes and leading the Wednesday Prayer Service and Sunday worship services.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 4-9 with the theme, "Missions Giving People Hope." As Pastor Crouch stated in the February 25 *InReach*: *Home Missions is about winning America for Christ. As Baptists, we are serious about our commitment and we have dedicated missionaries who forge into all kinds of places giving a witness. March and the Easter Season is the time we give emphasis to this portion of our mission task. Our church has a goal of \$12,000 for this special offering.* The guest speakers for the week were Rev. and Mrs. Rusty Sumrall, Home Missionaries to Rochester, New York.

The March 11, 1991, *InReach* announced two staff changes. Debbie Carter resigned as the Associate Pastor's Administrative Assistant because she and her family were moving to Pittsburgh. Ronna Pinkerton joined the staff as the new Administrative Assistant to the Associate Pastor. She was a graduate of Wingate College.

In the March 18, 1991 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch announced that the Second Convocation of the Baptist Fellowship of Moderate Baptists would meet in Atlanta from May 9-11:

The purpose of the meeting is to find fresh new ways of cooperation that are true to our historic convictions and that express our dreams and hopes for the future. It is also to deliberate and decide how we can fellowship and function within the Convention. In summary, our purpose is, in the power and guidance of the Spirit, to shape the future of our Baptist witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention is not going away. It's better to understand the crisis and be proactive in finding a solution.

The March 25, 1991, *InReach* carried two announcements. First, on March 24 Sharon Baptist Church, our "daughter" church,

broke ground for a new Adult and Preschool Building. Second, Dr. John Blizzard, the Interim Minister of Music, was ordained on March 24 to the gospel ministry. The Ordination Sermon was preached by Dr. H. Mitchell Simpson, Pastor of the University Baptist Church of Chapel Hill. Dr. Ron Bostic directed the Sanctuary Choir during the service.

During the March 24 Palm Sunday Service, the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra presented a concert entitled "For He Alone Is Worthy." John Bethea and Connie Staggs were narrators, and Tara and Phillip Dean were the soloists. The choir was directed by John Blizzard and accompanied by Jerry Johnson on the organ.

During March 1991, the Providence Endowment Fund received a bequest from the estate of Sam and Mary Perry of \$72,462.95, which was added to the Unrestricted Endowment. Mrs. Perry was most interested in the children, nursery, and youth of the church. This was the second major gift to the Unrestricted Endowment, which totaled \$163,744.06. Sam and Mary were charter members, and they felt good about their service in the Nursery Department which lasted until Mary's death in February 1990.

The spring 1991 revival was held April 5-7. As Pastor Crouch stated in the April 1 *InReach*: *Our revival begins Friday with the emphasis on our children. We seek to educate and strongly influence them toward the faith.....Our evangelist is Dr. Ken Chafin, a friend, pastor, teacher author; strong denominational leader and a real veteran of our Baptist battles – he comes in the prime of his ministry to share with us the good news. At the time, Dr. Chafin was Pastor of the Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky.*

Minister with Youth Tommy Justus announced on April 8, 1991, that the Summer Mission Trip would be July 12-24 to New York to work with three congregations doing Bible Clubs, Vacation Bible Schools, worship services and physical maintenance. They would also explore various sights and events in New York City.

At the quarterly business meeting on April 14, 1991, the church voted to incorporate for tax and security reasons. In addition, the Sunday evening agenda was changed so that the only events taking place on Sunday evenings would be Discipleship Training or

worship. In 1992, recognition services and musicals for youth and children would be held on Wednesday nights.

The April 22, 1991, *InReach* announced two staff anniversaries. Lori Leroy celebrated her first year as Music/Publications Secretary, and Linda Burris, Children/Youth Secretary, celebrated her first anniversary. Both had made positive contributions to the church ministry.

Providence members Jeff and Marie Gaskin were featured in the May 1991 *Guideposts Magazine*. Marie shared her story of son Brian who was blind and deaf. The Gaskin family was an inspiration to the congregation, which was happy that they received this special recognition.

The May 13, 1991, *InReach* announced that prospective Minister of Music Lee Porter and wife, Drew, would be visiting. Lee directed the Sanctuary Choir during the May 19 morning worship services. He was a graduate of Belmont College in Tennessee and Louisiana State University. Prior to coming to Providence on June 16, 1991, Lee was Minister of Music at the University Baptist Church in Baton Rouge.

Providence celebrated its 37th Anniversary on Sunday, May 19, 1991. The day's main activities were: Prove the Tithe Sunday with members participating by giving a week's tithe; High Attendance in Sunday School by attending and bringing a friend; and dinner-on-the-grounds. The guest speaker for the day was Dr. R. G. Puckett, editor of the *Biblical Recorder* since 1982.

Maxine Dunn, Church Financial Secretary, celebrated her eighteenth anniversary on May 18. As Pastor Crouch stated in the May 20 *InReach*: *We express appreciation to her for these years of service. Her excellent performance, dedication, loyalty and warm personality have been outstanding.*

Associate Pastor Tommy Hall announced his resignation on May 27, effective July 7, 1991. He had been called to be the Pastor of the Oaklawn Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. As he stated in the *InReach*: *It is with mixed feelings that I tender my resignation to you.....I am excited about this new opportunity, but saddened as I think of leaving my family at Providence Baptist.* In the same *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated: *Tommy Hall's resignation was no*

surprise! He has proven his ability to administer, minister, and preach, so we rejoice in his call. He will be sorely missed.

June 1991 began with three staff anniversaries: Tommy Justus, Minister with Youth, one year; Wendell Sloan, Business Administrator, ten years; and Sarah Watson, Receptionist/Secretary, eight years. All three had played a vital role in the Providence ministry.

The June 3, 1991, *InReach* announced that Providence would have two summer helpers. Debra Wallace would be working in the music area assisting new Minister of Music Lee Porter. Kevin Spencer, the Summer Youth Associate, would help Tommy Justus with the youth program. Kevin was from Greensboro and would be a junior at Chapel Hill in the fall.

The June 17, 1991, *InReach* carried two announcements of note to the congregation. On June 23, there was a reception at the Mecklenburg Baptist Association office for Rev. Ron Pinkerton, new Director of Missions. On June 14, Dr. William Henry Crouch, Jr., eldest son of the pastor, became the twenty-third president of Georgetown College in Kentucky.

On June 30, 1991, Dr. John Blizzard, who had served two years as Interim Minister of Music, gave a concert accompanied by his wife, Luci. A reception for them and the Lee Porters followed the concert. The Porters were greeted by a royal Providence “pounding” of food items.

At the June 23 vesper hour, Dr. Jay Casey, Pastor of the Lake Norman Baptist Church, was the guest speaker. He had preached and taught seminars at Providence in prior years; however, the June 23 sermon was more like a “trial sermon.” At a called business meeting on July 14, the church called and Dr. Casey accepted the position of Associate Pastor, replacing Tommy Hall. The call was contingent upon Dr. Casey signing a “Covenant Agreement.”

1. Under this covenant, Dr. Casey agrees to accept a call as Associate Pastor, if such a call is extended, by the church in conference, and to assume additional responsibilities as required upon the resignation or retirement of the Senior Minister.
2. After the call of a new Senior Minister, Dr. Casey will meet with him within 60 days of his arrival to determine

whether it is mutually desirable for Dr. Casey to remain as Associate Pastor. If it is not mutually agreeable, then Dr. Casey will resign within six months of such meeting.

3. Dr. Casey agrees to remain as an Interim Minister for as long as the Senior Minister position is vacant.

In the July 15, 1991 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch responded:

With the selection of an Associate Pastor, our ministerial staff is complete. We have a young staff in place for the transitional stages ahead. With the pending retirement in the next few years of the Senior Minister of 23 years, it is very important to have such a staff well-equipped for ministry and well-prepared for any transition.

Jay Casey will be the coordinator of the ministers. His role is well-defined and the covenant we made protects him and the staff. He comes with excellent experience and abilities to lead our educational program.

At the same quarterly business meeting, the congregation, after heated debate, approved the Denominational Issues Committee's recommendations as follows:

1. We move that Providence Baptist Church adopt the Baptist Faith and Message which was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.
2. We move that Providence Baptist Church affirm that it is a free and open congregation of believers; and as such, endorse inclusive membership, open study of the Scripture, and the calling of ministers regardless of gender.
3. We move that Providence Baptist Church maintain its relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.
4. We move that Providence Baptist Church actively support the efforts to establish and nurture seminaries which are dedicated to the basic Baptist principles, academic freedom, excellence in preparing individuals regardless of gender for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
5. We move that Providence Baptist Church establish a committee that will be charged with the responsibility of defining for the church methods for funding mission

projects which have been negatively impacted by actions of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

6. We move that Providence Baptist Church amend the Preamble to its Constitution to reflect that Providence Baptist Church is a free, faithful, and autonomous body and direct the Constitution and By-Laws Committee to present to the church for proper action a Preamble which reflects the essence of the meaning of the previously approved motions identified as #1 to #5 inclusive.

The July 29, 1991, *InReach* welcomed Jeff Perks to the Music Ministry as Staff Organist. Jeff was a talented composer/arranger as well as organist. His duties would include music for the worship services, accompanist, and assistant conductor of the Sanctuary Choir. He would also assist with the instrumental program as arranger and ensemble accompanist, direct one of the youth choirs and be the principle organist for weddings and funerals.

While the Crouches were vacationing at Lake Lure during August 1991, the pulpit was filled by Dr. Tom Graves, President of the new Baptist Seminary in Richmond; Rev. Steve Cromer, Pastor of the Rivermont Avenue Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia; and Dr. Jay Casey, the new Associate Pastor. In addition, Kevin Spencer, the Summer Youth Associate, preached at a vesper service.

August 13, 1991, marked the first anniversary of Ann Charles-Craft as Minister with Children. The August 12 *InReach* stated: *We express appreciation to her for a year of hard work and loving care of our children.*

At a called business meeting on August 18, 1991, the Deacon Board presented a recommendation that was approved by the congregation as follows:

Recognizing a number of possibilities continue to present themselves to our pastor which would allow him to serve the Lord in new mission opportunities, we desire to support him if he should elect to accept such a mission endeavor. Therefore, we recommend that we continue his 1991 compensation from the date he accepts such a call through September 1993, and that we solicit a love offering at the time of his leaving in recognition of his many years of faithful

service to the members of Providence Baptist Church. Medical insurance will be continued until Henry and/or Jan reach the age to qualify for Medicare or until covered by another insurance plan.

Two staff changes were announced in the August 19, 1991 *InReach*. Debbie Blake, Director of the Weekday Ministry, resigned, and Gordon Mayzik joined the staff as Food Service Manager. Gordon was a graduate of several food service management schools and had worked in many large institutions as food service manager.

September 1991 began with two Discipleship Training Seminars for adults: *Church Leadership* led by Pastor Crouch and *New Testament* led by Associate Pastor, Jay Casey.

September was also State Missions Month with the theme, "State Missions: The North Carolina Way." The state goal was \$1,800,000 with the Providence goal set at \$2,500.

On September 15, 1991, the Music Ministry hosted the sixth annual Celebration of Music in Worship through the Metropolitan Music Ministries, featuring choir members from four Charlotte area churches and an orchestra. A reception followed the concert. Providence member, Dr. Martha Iley, was President of the Ministries.

In the September 16, 1991 *InReach*, Pastor Crouch stated:

For weeks people have asked the question about our future plans. It is time for us to share these plans with you. The appointment we have waited for has now come from Dr. Tom Graves. He has asked me to become Director of Development for the new seminary in Richmond, beginning November 1. The Trustees of the Seminary should confirm this appointment on October 14.

I have notified Dr. Graves that I will accept this mission opportunity and thus my last Sunday as Pastor will be October 27. It seems that I will have completed 23 years and one month as pastor. Thanks to the vision and generosity of Providence, I will have the opportunity of a transition period between the active pastorate and final retirement.....To be your pastor has been a great experience and God has blessed our pilgrimage. The time has come for

a new leader at Providence and for me to turn my efforts to another cause for the Kingdom.

Let's make these last days productive and meaningful. We don't have to say goodbye – so we remain partners in God's calling.

The September 16 ***InReach*** also announced that, effective October 1, Linda Burris would make a change from Secretary to Children and Students to Administrative Assistant for the Children's Ministry area. She had been at Providence almost two years. It also announced that Pat Brown, who had worked in the Child Development Center for almost three years, had resigned to accept a new opportunity.

The September 23, 1991 ***InReach***, in An Alliance Update Column, stated that Southern Baptist Alliance Directors had met in preparation for the March Annual Convocation. They reported that there were 132 affiliated churches, and the 1991 receipts were almost \$400,000.

Also, a proposed name change would be recommended at the March Convocation (The Alliance of Baptists) along with mission and ministry proposals. The Baptist Seminary at Richmond was off to a good start, and its acceptance by moderate Baptists was a highlight. The 1992 Convocation was held at Providence, March 5-7. (The Southern Baptist Alliance started at Providence in 1986.)

In business session on September 29, 1991, the church approved a 1992 budget of \$1,792,000. Pledge Day was set for October 13 following the Stewardship Promotion Campaign. In addition, the congregation chose Wade Stokes to be the new Sunday School Superintendent for 1991-1992.

At the October 6, 1991, quarterly business meeting, the church approved a recommendation from the deacons to select a Pastoral Search Committee, set the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal at \$42,000, and made the Ad Hoc Denominational Issues Committee a permanent church committee. In addition, the church approved naming the Children's Library in memory of Mary Perry who had served for many years in the Children's Ministry, nurturing the spiritual life of all who were privileged to know her.

On October 20, 1991, a new Adult Discipleship Course began, entitled "When Bad Things Happen to Good People and Beyond,

Toward An Understanding of Evil.” The class was led by Tommy Justus, Minister with Students.

During the October 20 evening service, Lee Porter II was ordained into the ministry. The Ordination Sermon was preached by Dr. Lee Porter, Jr., father of the candidate. The special music was a solo entitled “Prayer of St. Francis” by his wife, Drew Porter.

The annual Fall Festival of fun and fellowship was held on October 26. October 27, 1991, was Henry Crouch’s last Sunday as Pastor of Providence Baptist Church. His final sermon was “Adventures in Faith” with Colossians 1:24-29 as the Scripture reference. In addition, Missy Warren began her duties as Administrative Assistant to Weekday Ministry Associate Becky Stout.

Henry Crouch said his goodbyes to Providence in the October 28, 1991 **InReach**:

October comes to an end this week and with it my career as pastor of Providence. I will turn in my keys to the Business Manager, clear out my desk, and walk away from a task that has occupied my time for 23 years and a month.

My feelings are mixed! It’s been a wonderful Adventure with God and you. We have had our ups and downs – successes and failures – enjoyed some marvelous relationships with staff and congregation. I’m grateful for the wonderful and faithful supporters who have undergirded the ministry at this place. I will miss the daily associations and assignments. There is grief and sadness that it’s all over.

On the other hand – I eagerly look forward to a new challenge and will begin immediately to travel for the Baptist Seminary in Richmond. My task is to raise money to keep alive the dream of a free seminary for Baptists in the Southeast. It will be a full-time task and will require my best efforts.

Your generosity and gratitude have made this possible. It gives me a transition from the pastorate to retirement with some opportunity for continued service to the denomination. I will do my best to deserve this privilege and hope it will all be to the glory of God. Please pray for me and continue to be my partner in ministry.

In the same *InReach*, Associate Pastor Dr. Jay Casey said:

The 'interim' has begun at Providence, a new experience, and because of its novelty, an era foreboding fear and, too, hopeful expectation.

What will happen in the days ahead? Worship will continue under the able leadership of guest speakers. A committee of Sam Rutland, Dorothea Compton, Wade Stokes, Drag Kimrey, Clarence Adams and Jay Casey has been charged by the Administrative Deacons to secure pulpit guests. Your suggestions are welcome! Give them to any of these persons.

Each of us can contribute to Providence's continuing growth by speaking warmly to guests, visiting prospects, doing our tasks responsibly, trusting that God is able to bless those who'll venture life in his service. You pray, give, participate, praise, and just see how we can be blessed here!

November 9-10, 1991, was set aside by the deacons as a time to celebrate Henry and Jan Crouch's service to Providence and to give them an official, warm blessing. On November 9, a dinner at the church honored them. All deacons who had served and their spouses were invited. On November 10, the 11:00 am service celebrated the Crouch's ministry and commissioned them for the work ahead at the Richmond Baptist Seminary. That afternoon, a church-wide reception honored the Crouches, and members were asked to drop-in at times determined by the first letter of their last names. The Crouches also received a very generous love offering.

Evaluating Henry Crouch's 23-year Providence ministry is not an easy task. His management style was much like that of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in a corporation. He liked to hire young, talented staff members and delegate responsibilities to them, closely supervising and monitoring their responsibilities on a daily basis (a little macro and micro management). This style was both effective and ineffective. There was a big turnover of staff, with few staying more than four or five years. Yet, he developed some positive relationships that continue even to the present.

Henry Crouch's main strengths were commitment to the ministry, hands-on personal visitation with prospective new members, dedication to Baptist principles and heritage, and personal knowledge

and working experience at all levels of Baptist ministry. His weaknesses were ego (*prima donnish*), liking to receive more credit or stature for himself or deflecting errors or mistakes to other staff members. He was a good preacher in the pulpit but not the polished, charismatic type that Gordon Weekley was when healthy. Two examples should suffice. First, when the Pulpit Committee approached him as a prospective pastor for Providence, he really did not want to come. He told the author, in a conversation, that he stalled them by saying that if the church bought the 16 acres of land adjacent to the original eight acres, it would be a sign for him to accept the call to Providence. In fact, he felt the young, struggling church would not be able to do this. They proved him wrong and he was committed. Second, he had been at Providence for several years before the congregation realized he wore a hair-piece. He was late washing it one morning and decided to dry it over a light bulb and ruined it. Some members at the morning service thought there was a guest preacher.

In the end, credit needs to be given when deserved. Henry Crouch, for over 23 years, took a struggling young church and, with the help of the constantly changing congregation, led it to the fifth largest Baptist church in North Carolina, both in numbers and giving to Baptist activities and programs. It was a feat few others could have achieved. Providence has always been a mission-minded church, and Henry Crouch led the way, with the help of partners-in-service. The highlights of his ministry are as follow:

1. Membership grew from 1,100 to 2,500
2. Budget grew from \$100,000 to \$1.7 million
3. Three buildings, along with secured land
4. The creation of the first refugee family of Charlotte Baptist churches – Korean Mission
5. The formation of four Charlotte churches
6. The ordination of 15 young men and three young women into the gospel ministry
7. First Habitat for Humanity House built by a Charlotte church
8. Missions giving — sixth in North Carolina
9. Member, Foreign Mission Board for eight years

10. Member, General Board and Executive Committee of North Carolina Baptist State Convention
11. First President, Southern Baptist Alliance

The 1990-1991 Children's Ministry marked the beginning of some new traditions:

1. Children's Day: A day of worship which focuses on children as worship leaders and the church's responsibility for the spiritual nurture of our children.
2. Children as Worship Leaders: Children leading not only with music, but also writing and leading the litanies for our worship services.
3. Quarterly Parent-Child Dedication Services: Expanding the worship service, experiencing dedications as community, as family; calling forth the responsibility of the church for the faith of the community comes before the faith of the individual.
4. The Mary Perry Children's Library: New and improved, the Children's Library was moved to CLC 100, new hours of operation: open before Sunday School, following worship, and Wednesday nights; a place to find books to share with your children as they grow in the Lord.
5. The Providence Baptist Child Development Center: A vital and valuable ministry of our Children's Ministry, expanded classes, improved facilities and curriculum materials; Becky Stout, a seminary trained minister, called to develop the ministry of Weekday Preschool Education.

The guiding hand of Ann Charles-Craft, Minister with Children, was seen in the above new traditions. The Children's Ministry was moving forward.

The guest interim preacher for November 3, 17, and 24, 1991, was Dr. Douglas Aldrich; however, no information was given about him or his position. November 10 was the Recognition Service for Henry and Jan Crouch.

The following Pastor Search Committee was approved by the congregation on November 16, 1991:

Clarence Adams, Chair
 David Arant
 Rod Coward
 Jackie Cromer
 Cleo Gullick
 Jana Harston
 Bryce Iley

Jim Morgan
 Anita Pangle
 David Pyatt
 Patty Walker
 Allen Williams
 Jim Wylie

Their first task was holding discussion groups and soliciting opinions which led, after several months, to a Pastor Profile that would lead them to the type of pastor desired by the congregation to succeed Henry Crouch. It was nearly 2-1/2 years before they were ready to submit a candidate.

The annual Community Thanksgiving Service was held on November 27, 1991, at St. Gabriel Catholic Church. Dr. Jay Casey delivered the Thanksgiving Sermon.

December 1991 began with the Lottie Moon Missions Banquet on December 6. Following the dinner, Dr. Cynthia Ruth Howard, a Pediatrician and medical missionary to Nigeria, gave the evening message. This was followed by the Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions from December 1-8.

The Music Ministry's Christmas concerts began on December 6 when the Senior Adult Choir presented "All Over The World It's Christmas." On December 8, there were four presentations. At the 8:30 am service, the combined youth choirs presented "A Christmas Antiphon." At 11:00 am, the Sanctuary Choir presented "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." At 5:00 pm, Music Associate Jeff Perks gave a piano concert. At 6:00 pm, a "Celebration of the Holy Child" worship service was led by the children of Providence.

On December 17 at 8:30 am, the combined youth choirs presented "Brightest and Best." At 11:00 am, the Sanctuary Choir presented "Who Will Come to Bethlehem." At 6:00 pm, there was a Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra concert entitled "Magnificat" by Pergolesi and "O Holy Night" by Rutter. The annual Christmas at Providence dinner and fellowship was on December 18.

At 8:30 am on December 22, the combined youth choirs gave a concert entitled "Celebrate His Birth." At 11:00 am, the Sanctuary Choir presented "Away in a Manger." The Providence Christmas

Season closed on December 24 with the annual Candlelight vesper service.

During December 1991, the pulpit was filled by: Rev. Bill Andrews on December 1; Rev. Ronald Boswell, Director of Volunteers in the Southern Baptist Convention Missions Department, on December 8; Dr. Chris White, President of Gardner-Webb College, on December 15; and Associate Pastor Jay Casey on December 22 and 29.

From January 1 until October 27, 1991, Henry Crouch's last Sunday at Providence, the following persons filled the pulpit during his absence:

Dr. Jay Casey, Pastor, Lake Norman Baptist Church

Rev. Steve Cromer, Pastor, Rivermont Avenue Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia

Ms. Mary Dodd, Mecklenburg Baptist Assn. Women's Dir.

Dr. Tom Graves, President, Richmond Baptist Seminary

Dr. Lee Porter, Jr., Design Editor of Life and Work Sunday School Curriculum, Southern Baptist Convention

Dr. R. G. Puckett, Editor, *Biblical Recorder*

Dr. H. Mitchell Simpson, Pastor, University Baptist Church, Chapel Hill

Mr. Kevin Spencer, Summer Youth Associate

Rev. Rusty Sumrall, Home Missionary, New York City

The long interim between Henry Crouch and Chuck Bugg began in January 1992. Associate Pastor Jay Casey filled the role of Pastor and Chief Administrator very effectively. On January 4, the Lord's Supper was observed during the worship hour. Dr. Scott Spencer, New Testament Professor at Wingate College, preached on January 12. Jay Casey preached on January 19. Dr. Don Garner, Professor of Old Testament at Carson-Newman College, preached on January 25. In addition, he led the January 25-26 annual Winter Bible Study of the book of Isaiah. During the Bible Study, Dr. Garner focused upon the major themes of Isaiah's prophecy, using selected texts to illustrate the prophet's message to his generation and the continuing relevance of his preaching for God's people.

On January 12, 1992, at the quarterly business meeting, the congregation approved a revised 1992 budget of \$1,540,000. In addition, Sam Rutland was added to the Deacon Emeritus list.

On February 2, 1992, Dr. William B. Stillerman, President of the Baptist Retirement Homes of North Carolina, filled the pulpit. That evening the Winter Discipleship Training Seminars began: *Old Testament Survey* (Casey), *A Theology of Family* (Justus), *Intergenerational Choir* (Porter), and *Beginning Guitar* (Garrett). Baptist Women's Day was observed on February 4 with guest speaker Sheila Black, Director of Church and Communities Ministries with the Mecklenburg Baptist Association. Her topic was "North Carolina Baptists in Poland."

Dr. John Lewis, former Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Raleigh, preached on February 9. Dr. Edgar M. Arendall, former Pastor of Dawson Creek Baptist Church in Alabama, filled the pulpit on February 16.

On February 21, 1992, the Better Homes Club presented a *Marriage Enrichment* Seminar with guest speaker Rev. Bob D. Shepherd, Senior Minister of the First Baptist Church of Morganton.

Dr. Roy DeBrand, Professor of Homiletics at Southeastern Seminary, filled the pulpit on February 23. His topic was "The Successful Christian."

In the February 17, 1992 *InReach*, Jay Casey announced several staff changes. Kenneth Barnett, Custodial Supervisor, would assume additional duties related to building maintenance and oversight. Wendell Sloan, Business Administrator, would retire at the end of March, and the search for a new administrator had begun. Finally, Bonnie Adams, Administrative Assistant to the Pastor, would retire at the end of February.

On March 1, 1992, Rev. Ruth Fowler, Pastor of the Richboro Baptist Church of Staten Island, New York, preached. In addition, she was at Providence to participate in the Week of Prayer for Home Missions from March 1-8, 1992. During the 11:00 am worship service, Bonnie Adams was recognized for her 17 years of dedicated service to the church.

From March 5-7, 1992, Providence hosted the Fifth Anniversary Convocation of the Southern Baptist Alliance with the theme, "Building Bridges and Singing Songs." Keynote speakers included: Elizabeth Barnes, Joan Campbell, Richard Groves, John Hewitt, Alan Neely, Wiard Papkes and Frank Stagg. During the Convocation, the name was changed to The Alliance of Baptists.

On March 8, Dr. Carl Bates, former Pastor of the First Baptist Church and two-time Southern Baptist Convention President, preached. Jay Casey preached on March 15. March 22 was Youth Week, and the services were led by the youth. On March 29, 1992, Dr. Timothy Owings, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Augusta, Georgia, preached and led the spring revival.

On March 15, during the 11:00 am worship service, the Belmont University Chorale provided the music under the direction of Sherry Hill Kelly. During college, Lee and Drew Porter had sung and toured with the Belmont Chorale.

Providence members were active in missions during 1992. During February and March, George and Mary Ann Crouch served in Ivory Coast, West Africa. Rod Coward and several others went to Poland as a part of the North Carolina Baptist Men on Mission. In addition, the Providence Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal for Home Missions was \$12,000.

On April 5, 1992, the Music Ministry presented "Joy Comes in the Morning," a full costume drama, provided by the Intergenerational Choir, directed by Lee Porter and accompanied by Jeff Perks. From 9:30-10:30 am, there was a Drop-In Reception for Wendell Sloan, who was retiring as Business Administrator.

On Palm Sunday, April 12, 1992, the Music Ministry presented "The Seven Last Words of Christ," directed by Lee Porter and accompanied on the organ by Jeff Perks. The Sunday sermon on April 19, 1992, was preached by Jay Casey, and the special music was presented by the Rejoice Trio and the Chancel Choir.

The April 13, 1992, *InReach* announced the employment of Richard Landers as Interim Business Administrator to replace Wendell Sloan, effective April 6, 1992. Richard and his wife, Michelle, had been members of Providence for four years. As Jay Casey stated: *Richard is an experienced businessman whose training and background enable him to provide us quality support for the operation of our programs and facility.*

Sunday, April 26, 1992, was Children's Day. The guest minister was Chaplain Sharon Engebretson, Director of the Department of Pastoral Care of the Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem.

May 3, 1992, was Senior Adult Day with guest minister Rev. Leon Riddick, former Pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church of

Charlotte. The special luncheon guest was former Providence member and Charlotte Mayor, Richard Vinroot. That evening the Young Musicians presented Buryl Red's "It's Cool in the Furnace" drama/musical about Daniel in the lion's den.

On May 5, Providence observed Baptist Women's Day with guest speaker Navy Chaplain David Cromer, son of B. C. and Jackie Cromer.

Sunday, May 10, was Mother's Day. The guest minister was Dr. Molly Marshall, Professor of Theology at Southern Seminary. This was followed on May 17 by the 38th Anniversary of Providence with guest minister Rev. Bill Andrews, former Associate Pastor and missionary to Chile. A key part of the celebration was the charter member recognition during both services.

May 17-24, 1992, was the Mecklenburg Baptist Association's Week of Prayer for local missions support. The financial goal was \$40,000. On May 24, as a part of this focus, the guest minister was Rev. Ron Pinkerton, Executive Director of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association.

On May 18, 1992, Maxine Dunn, Financial Secretary, celebrated 19 years of service to Providence.

From May 29-30, 1992, Providence hosted the National Child-Life Conference. Ann Charles-Craft, Minister with Children, encouraged all preschool/children's leaders and parents to attend. The conference was sponsored by the publishing firm of Smyth & Helwys, a free press for Baptists.

Sunday, May 31, 1992, was Baccalaureate Day honoring high school and college graduates. Jay Casey preached the Baccalaureate Sermon, entitled "New Tenants Have Arrived."

June 1992 was filled with 1993 budget forums, pastor search forums and staff changes. Three secretaries – Tina Hardy, Maha Boulos and Lea Ann Mancuso – resigned due to personal or family situations.

Charlotte Habitat for Humanity presented Providence an award for the longest continuous service for a volunteer crew. The award was accepted by crew leader Rick Edwards on behalf of the vinyl siding crew which had been in existence for six years working on over 50 homes.

Associate Pastor Jay Casey preached all four Sundays in June 1992. His messages, taken from the book of Acts, were designed to help members learn from the early church's experiences and how these experiences could help Providence be a better contemporary church.

The Music Ministry was very active during the summer of 1992: June 14, Contemporary Praise Concert; June 28, an Evening Concert Series featuring Carter Cook on the piano; July 12, Lee and Drew Porter gave a vocal concert; July 28, the Rejoice Trio; August 9, Pam Cash was featured on the flute; and on August 23, the Sanctuary Choir's Favorite Anthems Concert. The summer concluded with the Youth Choir Musical on August 30.

In the June 15 *InReach*, Jay Casey asked the question, *What does it take to make church really work, for members to find church a truly satisfying experience?* He answered his own question by giving two recent examples. *Larry Williams started a support group for unemployed church members which proved helpful, and John Alexander provided the leadership to build a video archives of Providence ministries.* The key was to find a way to get involved.

Minister with Students Tommy Justus announced that Becky Clabough would be the Summer Student Associate to work with the youth and college ministries. On June 22, 1992, the Personnel Committee announced that Richard Landers had been hired as the full-time Business Administrator after serving capably as the Interim Administrator.

On July 5, 1992, the Youth Mission Trip Commissioning Service was held, and on July 10, 37 youth and 10 adults left for the New York area. While on mission, the youth led Backyard Bible Clubs, gave musical concerts, helped with crafts, organized games and taught Bible stories.

The guest minister on July 5 was Lt. David C. Cromer, a Squadron Chaplain stationed at Norfolk, Virginia, and the son of B. C. and Jackie Cromer. Later in July, he became ship's chaplain aboard the USS Savannah. On July 12, 19, and 26, Dr. Alan Neely, a former Professor at Southeastern Seminary and then Professor of Missions at Princeton University, was the guest preacher. Dr. Neely had spoken many times at Providence.

During July 1992, Providence began two new mission projects: First was holding a bone marrow registry for bone marrow transplants where nearly 150 names were added to the registry, which was coordinated through the Red Cross. The second was providing meals for the Homeless Shelter twice a month. Peg Heavner and Penny Hewett were instrumental in making these projects successful.

During August 1992, Tommy Justus, Minister with Youth, sponsored Mission Adventure which permitted the youth to help local Baptist churches in poorer sections canvass the neighborhoods and conduct Backyard Bible Clubs. This Youth in Ministry project proved to be very successful.

The guest preacher for August 1992 was Dr. Carl Bates, Pastor Emeritus of the First Baptist Church and two-term President of the Southern Baptist Convention. Dr. Bates had spoken many times at Providence.

There were four staff anniversaries during August. Jeff Perks celebrated his first year as Music Associate/Organist. Dr. Jay Casey celebrated his first year as Associate Pastor. Ann Charles-Craft celebrated her second year as Minister with Children. Finally, Gordon Mayzik celebrated his first year as Food Service Manager.

On Sunday evening, August 6, 1992, Dr. Cecil Sherman, Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, was the guest speaker. Following the worship service, he answered questions about the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, its plans for mission support, the current state of Southern Baptist mission work, and other issues of concern. Dr. Sherman would later serve as Interim Pastor for several months.

In the August 10 *InReach*, the Personnel Committee announced the resignation of Ronna Pinkerton, Administrative Assistant to the Associate Pastor. *We will miss Ronna's contribution to our church's ministry. Her many talents and efficient work have been especially valuable during the interim.*

The Fall Leadership Conference was held August 28-29, 1992, with the theme, "Education is a Church Affair." The conference keynote speaker was Dr. Robert Fulbright, Minister of Christian Education, Kirkwood Baptist Church of St. Louis, Missouri. Dr. Fulbright's topic was "Why the Church Must Teach."

August ended with the Music Ministry's presentation of "Live It To The Max!" It was a fabulous youth musical enjoyed by all.

September 6, 1992, was Promotion Day. The day's highlight was the 6:00 pm presentation of John's Gospel by Paul Alexander, a professional British actor. His presentation of John from the King James Version in a rich British accent was a truly moving worship experience.

September 13 was Single Adult Day. The guest speaker was Peggy Haymes, the Editor of *Reflections*, a new daily devotional guide from *Formations* of Smyth & Helwys Publishing firm.

September 18-20, 1992, was Focus on the Family weekend with sessions available for all age groups. The guest speaker was Dr. G. Wade Rowatt, Jr., Professor of Psychology of Religion at Southern Seminary. His Sunday, September 20, topic was "The Cost of a Christian Family."

The September 20, 1992 *InReach* carried the announcement that William Henry Crouch, Jr., son of Henry and Jan Crouch, was being inaugurated as President of Georgetown College in Kentucky on October 2, 1992.

September and October 1992 were Stewardship Emphasis months. The Stewardship Committee presented a series of worship services and seminars entitled "Faith and Money" with Dr. Jay Casey preaching on money and its uses. He was ably assisted by Dr. Bill Overby, the North Carolina Baptist Foundation leader.

October 1992 featured two retreats: First was the Couples Retreat October 23-25 at Ocean Isle Beach with the theme, "Married to a Christian." Second was the Singles Fall Retreat October 23-24 at White Oak Conference Center of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. Tommy Justus, Minister with Students, led this retreat with its theme of "Eyes to See, Ears to Hear the Parables of Christ."

The guest preacher for October 25, 1992, was Dr. Elizabeth Achtemeier, Adjunct Professor of Bible and Homilectics at Union Theological Seminary of Richmond. Dr. Achtemeier was a writer, lecturer and preacher throughout the United States and Canada.

October 1992 ended with the annual Fall Festival of games, fun, frolicking and fellowship, concluding with the Grey Seal Puppets presentation of "The Emperor's New Clothes." This 45-minute performance combined the beautiful storytelling of Hans Christian

Anderson with the artistry of one of the nation's premiere puppet companies.

The guest preacher on November 1, 1992, was Dr. Charles Rabon, Director of Church-Minister-Denominational Relationships of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. His sermon title was "What Attracted You to the Church?" That evening the congregation discussed and approved a 1993 budget of \$1,680,176. Pledge Day for the new budget was to be November 22.

Dr. Jay Casey preached the November 1992 sermons with each service featuring personal testimonies from church members about their experiences as stewards of God's gifts. Several of the presenters were Ben Rentz, Drag Kimrey, Dennis Moody and Vicki Casey. Another feature of the stewardship emphasis was a video presentation of Providence's ministries and activities.

Pledge cards were returned during both services on November 22, and a Celebration Dinner followed in the Activities Center. The stewardship campaign concluded with an Every Member Canvass that followed the dinner. Beth Byron coordinated the Celebration Meal, and Bob Irving headed the canvass effort.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was held November 30-December 4, 1992, with each day featuring a separate part of the world and its mission needs. Key speakers for the week were Connie Andrews, Janet Kirkley, Mary Ann Crouch and Tommy Justus. The church Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal was \$42,000. The missions emphasis concluded on December 12 with a Missions Banquet featuring Dr. Keith Parks, retired President of the Foreign Mission Board. The banquet theme was "Declare Hope."

The Advent Season began on November 29, 1992, with the Hanging of the Green. This was followed on December 6 by the Instrumental Christmas Program and the Children at Christmas Program. On December 13, the Sanctuary Choir presented its Christmas Concert, and the annual Christmas Banquet was December 16. This was followed on December 20 by the Song of Christmas and the Service of Carols and Lessons. The Christmas season concluded on December 24 with the annual Candlelight Christmas Eve vesper service.

During the holiday season, Providence was actively involved in several local missions projects. The main ones were Rebound, the

Dove's Nest, County Police Christmas Project, and Loaves and Fishes for the needy.

The year 1992 ended on December 27 with the college and career students leading both morning services. Tommy Justus' sermon title was "After the Presents and Before the Football."

Pledges toward the 1993 budget had reached \$1,427,330 or 84% of the budget of \$1,680,176. Work still needed to be done to enter 1993 on a positive note.

At Providence 1993 began with three staff anniversaries. Bobby Butler had completed six years as Director of Activities; Anne Bertini had completed seven years as Director for Senior Adults, and Becky Stout had completed two years as Weekday Ministries Associate.

The guest preacher on January 3, 10, and 24, 1993, was Dr. Cecil Sherman, Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Dr. Jay Casey preached on January 17 and 31.

At the January 10, 1993, quarterly conference, the church approved renting space to the Fletcher School, a non-profit, educational institution devoted to meeting the needs of learning disabled children. The school maintained a visible presence at Providence until September 2003, when it opened a beautiful campus on Sardis Road. The congregation also approved a revised 1993 budget of \$1,600,000 because pledges fell substantially short of the original budget of \$1,680,176.

The annual Winter Bible Study was held on January 17, 1993, with the topic "The Sermon on the Mount" from Matthew 5-7. Dr. Scott Spencer, Professor of Religion at Wingate College, was the adult leader. Tim Trockenbrot, Tommy Justus, Ann Charles-Craft and Linda Burris led other age groups.

Pulpit guest preachers during February 1993 were: Dr. Cecil Sherman on February 7 and 14; Dr. Frank Tupper, Professor of Theology at Southern Seminary, on February 21; and Ann Charles-Craft on February 28, which was Children's Day.

The Winter Discipleship Training Seminars began on February 7 and continued for eight Sunday evenings with sessions for all age groups. Two of the most popular were *Introduction to Christian Theology* led by Jay Casey and *Experiencing God Through the Arts* led by Linda Burris.

February 7-14, 1993, was Focus on WMU Week. WMU Director Marie Irving and other leaders were effective in showing such members how the WMU spread the concept of missions education both locally and worldwide.

February 11, 1993, was the GA/Acteen Mother/Daughter Banquet with guest speaker Barbara Joiner, a world renowned author and speaker. Anne Tunstall was the GA Director and program organizer.

On February 14, 1993, worshippers were greeted by a new **Baptist Hymnal**. As the February 8 *InReach* stated: *This Baptist Hymnal is the largest, most comprehensive hymnal ever produced by and for Baptists. You will find it doctrinally sound, musically versatile, and physically appealing. We hope and trust that you will join us in this new venture to enhance our worship.* The 836 hymnals were purchased through donations and gifts.

On February 26, 1993, the Better Homes Club invited members to join them for an evening of "Puttin' On The Ritz, With A Black Tie Affair." The guest speaker was Sylvia Echols, a Child Development Specialist, whose topic was "Reclaiming the Family." Entertainment was provided by Lynn Hales, vocalist and church member.

March 7, 1993, was Special Education Sunday based upon John 13:34: *A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.* This was followed by the Week of Prayer for Home Missions and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The week's theme was "Is there Something You Can Do?" The Providence goal was \$12,000.

March 14-21, 1993, was Youth Week with a new feature, the Metamorphosis Retreat, focusing on "Being Me." How do I become all that God wants me to be? Youth preachers for the March 21 morning services were Jeffery Hooks, Ashley McDonald and Emily Still.

March 28, 1993, was Single Adult Ministry Day with the theme, "Bring A Friend." The festivities began with breakfast in the chapel and focused upon opportunities for singles.

On Palm Sunday, April 4, 1993, the Music Ministry presented Handel's "Messiah," featuring the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra. Lee Porter directed the performance and was accompanied by Jeff

Perks on the organ. Soloists were Gary Grant, Lynn Hales, Peg Heavner, Matt Middlebrooks, Susan Page and Sarah Watson.

The April 12, 1993, *InReach* announced that the annual New York Mission Trip was scheduled for July 16-27. The youth would be working with four congregations doing Bible Clubs, Vacation Bible Schools and leading worship services. The *InReach* also reported on a mission trip to the Ivory Coast where George and Mary Ann Crouch and Ann Charles-Craft participated in the ministry of the Bouake Mission and helped train Sunday School teachers.

On April 18, 1993, a special congratulations was extended to Maxine Dunn who had completed 20 years of service as Financial Secretary.

The April 26, 1993, *InReach* printed a letter from Wendell and Martha Sloan who were serving a four-month mission trip at the European Baptist Theological Seminary in Switzerland. Martha was the official gardener, and Wendell supervised the bookstore and assisted the seminary president. Wendell had been Minister of Education and Business Administrator at Providence for many years.

May 2, 1993, was Senior Adult Day to honor their service and dedication, recognize their leadership in worship, nourish them with a luncheon at noon, and enrich them with a guest speaker, Mrs. E. J. Underwood from Rebound and Dove's Nest. That evening the Music Ministry presented "Celebrate Life," a pulpit drama that featured the Intergenerational Choir directed by Lee Porter and accompanied by Patty McBrayer. The soloists were Beth Tunstall, Lynn Hales and Betsy DeLaddy.

On May 16, 1993, during both morning worship services, the Pastor Search Committee requested and the church approved the committee's proposal that when a candidate was presented for consideration, it should be done at the 11:00 am service only. The committee felt that one service would provide the opportunity for the entire church family to experience the moment together.

Providence celebrated its 39th Anniversary on May 16, 1993. Charter members and former staff personnel were recognized during the 11:00 am worship service. Good food, fun and fellowship followed in the Activities Center.

On Friday, May 21, 1993, the Better Homes Club had a dinner and "Romantic Moonlight Cruise" in the fellowship hall with guest speakers Henry and Jan Crouch. Their topic was "Days of Our Lives." It was good to have them back.

In the May 17 **InReach**, Associate Pastor Jay Casey announced that long-time Providence members Carolyn and Drag Kimrey were leaving: *Tribute ought to be given to Drag and Carolyn. They are just about gone from Providence, on their way to Richmond and studies at the Baptist Seminary. What a journey! We salute them for their faith to venture out into the unknown, but to take with confidence this first step, believing that this is God's will, and acting out this trust.....So we say, 'Peace and Godspeed,' to Drag and Carolyn. What assets they have been to this place.* Drag completed his ministerial studies and is today a very successful Baptist pastor.

Sunday, May 23, was Missions Education Day with the theme, "Lead On! Laborers Together With God" from I Corinthians 3:9. On May 30, a Baccalaureate Service honored all high school and college graduates with guest preacher Dr. Carl Bates expounding on "How To Enjoy The Rest Of Your Life."

In the May 24, 1993 **InReach**, Jay Casey gave a summary of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meeting in Birmingham, Alabama:

CBF is doing the work a Baptist feels comfortable doing, using the principles a Baptist believes in, but also trying new approaches, stressing interests too long neglected. The CBF sessions themselves offer 'break out' opportunities for learning new strategies for local church ministry, reviewing new curriculum, discussing with others new approaches to church life and challenges. Laity are important in CBF. Women are treated as equals there. At every meeting since 1990, I have felt in an unusual way the presence of God's spirit in the gathering, among the participants.

Providence had 27 members in Birmingham for CBF's assembly. We heard again Cecil Sherman and Keith Parks. Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter declared their support for CBF, calling it their 'home.' We participated in blessing, and were blessed by 20 missionary couples/families. We watched one of our own members, Cindy Ring, offer herself

for mission service, wherever God leads her. We enjoyed each other's company in a positive, Christ-honoring environment. It's good, again, to be a Baptist.

In the May 31, 1993 ***InReach***, Jay Casey stated:

How is Providence doing in the interim? I don't know how many times I've heard that question during the last few months. Members and friends elsewhere have asked, and typically I've been able to say, 'fine.' This congregation has weathered well the interim without a Senior Minister. Our attendance is down, but just a little. The 'spirit' of people is healthy, for the most part. The staff is at the work to be done, other than occasionally. Our giving.....Well, now I have difficulty giving a satisfactory reply.

Giving was down substantially, even with budget cuts and savings. The decline in revenue was beginning to apply pressure and shrinkage in ministry services.

On June 6, 1993, the Music Ministry presented a concert by the Celebration Singers from the First Baptist Church of Shreveport, Louisiana. They were comprised of 65 junior and senior high students in the Shreveport Metropolitan area and directed by Randy Edwards, Minister of Music at First Baptist Church of Shreveport.

The June 7, 1993, ***InReach*** carried two staff announcements. First, Sarah Watson had completed 10 years as Receptionist and Secretary. Second, Tommy Justus, Minister with Students, announced that Mark Hardin of Morganton had been hired as Summer Student Associate. Mark was a May graduate of UNC-Charlotte.

In the June 14, 1993 ***InReach***, Clarence Adams, Chair of the Pastor Search Committee, gave a summary of the committee's progress as follows:

Several weeks ago the committee identified and extended an invitation to a person to be the candidate that the committee would present to the church for consideration as our next Senior Minister. After prayer and consideration, the candidate concluded that Providence Baptist Church was not where he felt the call of God to minister in the future. The committee was disappointed with the response, but refocused and renewed the quest for the right candidate.

June, July and August 1993 were relatively quiet months filled with Vacation Bible School, Youth Mission Trip to New York City, the annual Nantahala Family Camping and Rafting Trip, Day Camps, Children's Music Camp, Providence Sports Camp, socials and vacation time. Interspersed with these events was a visit on June 27 by Dr. Daniel E. Hatfield, son-in-law of Paul and Becky Godfrey. Dr. Hatfield, a graduate of Southern Seminary and a Southern Baptist Missionary to Panama, was currently serving as Professor of New Testament, Greek and Church History at the Panama Baptist Seminary. Next, on July 18, was a visit from Rev. Mark W. Andrews, son of Bill and Connie Andrews. Since 1980, Mark had been serving as a Southern Baptist Missionary to Chile.

The July 12, 1993, *InReach* announced, through the Membership Committee, that a New Membership Involvement Program would begin on August 1, 1993, to recruit and train a group of sponsors from the membership to work directly with new members on a one-on-one basis. The sponsors would guide new members through the introduction to, and participation in, programs and activities of particular interest or benefit to them. The object of the program was to assist new members in getting active and involved in the church and feeling more at home.

The July 26, 1993, *InReach* carried Ann Charles-Craft's resignation as Minister with Children. She had accepted the call as Associate Minister of Christian Education at the First Baptist Church of Gastonia. A reception was held for Ann following the evening worship service on August 15, which gave members the opportunity to express their appreciation for her ministry to the church.

On July 25, Dr. Tom Graves, President of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, presented to the congregation a bronze plaque recognizing the church's generous support of the seminary in its early years. The church's support of Henry Crouch during his work as the Director of Development at the seminary, gifts from the church's missions budget, and cash and in-kind gifts from Providence members totaled over \$250,000. In accepting the plaque on behalf of the congregation, Earl Pope, Chair of the Deacons, pledged the church's continuing support. At the time, two

Providence members, Drag Kimrey and Cindy Ring, were enrolled at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond.

The August 2, 1993, *InReach* announced that Cindy Ring was leaving Providence to attend the Baptist Seminary in Richmond. Cindy had been active in the Providence Singles Ministry by leading a weekly Bible Study group and serving on the Singles Adult Committee. Her goal was to enter the mission field and today she and her husband, Eddie, are active in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship mission field.

On August 15, 1993, the Music Ministry presented a Church-wide Ole Time Gospel Sing, consisting of old time favorite hymns, gospel trios, gospel quartets, duets and soloists. A good time was had by all who attended.

On August 29, the Chancel Choir presented "Glow In The Dark," directed by Lee Porter. The musical's theme was "It's getting darker, but we are the light."

The August 30, 1993, *InReach* announced two staff changes. First, Becky Stout resigned her position as Weekday Ministries Associate and would be starting as a teacher in a four-year-old class in the Preschool Program. Second, the Personnel Committee hired Sandra J. Richardson as Interim Minister with Children. Sandra came with an extensive background in children's ministry and counseling. Beginning September 7, she would work 30 hours a week as Interim Minister with Children and assist in other areas where needed.

On September 1, 1993, as a part of its Missions at Home Program, Providence began working with the Uptown Day Shelter for Men. Personal items (shampoo, deodorant, etc.) and casserole dishes for meals were provided. Penny Hewett served as the coordinator.

On September 12, 1993, the fall trimester of Discipleship Training Seminars began with classes for all ages. For example, Jay Casey taught *Principles for Congregational Renewal* which included elements, ideas, attitudes, and perspectives found in healthy, faithful churches.

The September 20, 1993, *InReach* announced that Dr. Charles B. Bugg would preach September 26 at the 11:00 am worship service. Following the service, the church would consider a

recommendation to extend a call to Dr. Bugg to be Providence's third Senior Minister.

Dr. Bugg, a native of Florida, was a graduate of Stetson University and received a Master of Divinity (1969) and Doctor of Philosophy (1972) from Southern Baptist Seminary. Diane Bugg was a native of Kentucky and a graduate of Kentucky Baptist Hospital of Nursing in Louisville. The Buggs had two children, Laura Beth and David.

Dr. Bugg had been a leading influence in Baptist life in the southeast for a number of years. He had distinguished himself as a compassionate pastor, effective leader and stimulating communicator of the gospel. Since 1989, he had served as the Carl E. Bates Professor of Christian Preaching at Southern Seminary. Prior to that, he led the historic First Baptist Church of Augusta, Georgia, in a seven-year period of impressive growth.

Following the 11:00 am worship service on September 26, Providence voted to call Dr. Charles B. Bugg as Senior Minister. Dr. Bugg would begin his ministry at Providence on November 14, 1993. He, Diane, and son David would move to Charlotte in early November.

Associate Pastor Jay Casey led the worship services until Dr. Bugg arrived on November 14, 1993. In October he began a five-week series of sermons designed to provide transition into what would be a new era for Providence with the arrival of the new Senior Minister.

The interim between Henry Crouch's departure and Chuck Bugg's arrival on November 14, 1993, was two years and 13 days. Records indicate that the day-to-day church ministries and activities continued to operate effectively and smoothly. Church members and staff personnel performed, in most instances, as though there was a Senior Minister. Regular programs prospered and new, innovative mission and curriculum programs were instituted. In general, Providence prospered during the interim. The only real negative was that the level of financial giving declined somewhat and budget cuts were necessary, which put pressure on some ministry areas.

A special word of thanks goes to Associate Pastor Dr. Jay Casey who stepped into a difficult transition era and dealt with it in a

professional and spirit-filled manner. Jay was a very good administrator and preacher; however, his most enduring legacy was his teaching. Jay was a learned Biblical scholar and was able to plan and conduct many Bible studies and seminars for the congregation. On November 8, 1993, in a personal word of thanks, Jay stated:

The Bible has two concepts of time. Time can be measured as a span of hours, or as an opportune moment to be seized. With your gifts Sunday — of a beautiful clock, a wonderful weekend with my family, a treasured album of kindness — you gathered up all the richness of our faith's sense of 'time.' The sound of our clock's chimes will long remind the Caseys of more than the hour. Those tones will keep fresh for us the assurance that these two years have been part of God's time, for you and for us. It is good to know that we have blessed. It is a sure thing that we have been blessed. Thank you, Providence.

On October 17, the Chancel Choir presented a concert entitled "Glow In The Dark, It's Getting Darker, But We Are The Light," directed by Lee Porter and accompanied by Drew Porter. The soloists were Rashaan Clemmons, Ruth Caldwell, Betsy DeLaddy, Ashley Martin, Chris Morris and Courtney Withrow.

On October 30, 1993, the annual Fall Festival, including games, food, fun and fellowship, was a special treat for all. In addition, Lane Riosley's "The Commedia Pinocchio" was presented by the Tarradiddle Players, the touring company of the Children's Theatre of Charlotte.

November 1993 was 1994 budget adoption and commitment month with a proposed budget of \$1,678,601. November 14 was commitment Sunday with a meal following the 11:00 am service. It was also Dr. Chuck Bugg's first Sunday as Senior Minister.

On November 3, 1993, a special missions study entitled "Indonesia: Missions in Transition" was led by David and Naomi Coward, Wycliffe Bible Translators in Indonesia. David was the son of Eva and Rod Coward.

In the November 8, 1993 *InReach*, Dr. Chuck Bugg wrote his first column as Senior Minister:

I can't tell you how glad our family is to be in Charlotte and to be a part of Providence. This church has a bright future, and on Sunday, November 14, we will take a big step toward that future.....The day after I moved to Charlotte, I read an article about the 'Can Do' spirit that permeates this community. With Christ's blessing, you and I can do what needs to be done. I look forward to meeting all of you.

In the November 22, 1993 ***InReach***, Dr. Bugg responded to the staff role of Jay Casey:

I want to affirm Jay Casey and say that I have asked him to remain as Associate Pastor, and he has agreed. When Jay was called, a covenant (White Paper) was adopted by the church. Part of that covenant states, 'Within 60 days of said employment of a new Senior Minister, the new Senior Minister shall meet with Dr. Casey to discuss the job description, expectations and performance requirements to determine if they mutually wish that Dr. Casey continue as the Associate Pastor.' Jay brings an outstanding assortment of skills and gifts to the ministry, and I consider him a valued colleague. Jay responded as follows: 'Dr. Bugg has asked me to remain at Providence. I have agreed to do this for several reasons, three of which are primary – my respect for and willingness to support Dr. Bugg as he begins ministry here, my deep affection for this congregation, and the sense that God approves of my continuing ministry here.'

The year 1993 drew to a close with the Advent Season entitled "Celebrate the Child." It began on November 28 with the Hanging of the Green. The Providence Christmas Gathering was December 5, and a special Memorial Service was held in the Gordon Weekley Chapel on December 12. The Music Ministry presented Rutter's "Gloria" on December 19. The Providence Christmas Concert on December 19 was entitled "Sounds of the Season" and performed by the various ensembles, handbells and choirs. The last service of the year on December 24 at 5:00 pm was called Christmas Eve Candlelight Vesper, a pageantry of candlelight in an informal gathering of family and friends.

December 1993 was Foreign Missions Emphasis with a Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$42,000. To highlight the offering,

Providence had a Missions Banquet on December 11 with Dr. Dellanna O'Brien, National Executive Director of the Women's Mission Union as guest speaker. Dr. O'Brien also spoke at both morning worship services on December 12.

On December 13, 1993, Dr. Bugg announced that Linda Burris had accepted the position of Administrative Assistant to the Senior Minister. Linda was a member of the church and had been working with the children's ministry.

From January 1, 1993 to November 7, 1993, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Rev. Mark Andrews, Missionary to Indonesia

Dr. Carl Bates, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist Church

Dr. Charles Bugg, Professor of Preaching, Southern Seminary

Dr. James Cammack, Pastor Emeritus, Snyder Memorial Baptist of Fayetteville

Rev. Ann Charles-Craft, Minister with Children

Dr. Jay Casey, Associate Pastor

Dr. Tom Graves, President, Baptist Seminary of Richmond

Mr. Mark Hardin, Summer Student Associate

Dr. Daniel E. Hatfield, Professor of Religion, Panama Baptist Seminary

Dr. Alan Neely, Professor of Religion, Princeton University Seminary

Dr. James Robinson, Special Assistant, Foreign Mission Board

Dr. Cecil Sherman, Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Dr. Frank Tupper, Professor of Theology, Southern Seminary

In the January 9, 1994 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg reminded the congregation that May 1994 marked Providence's 40th Anniversary and stated:

At the beginning of this new year, I want to affirm some of Providence's strengths and tell you about some of the things which I like:

1. *The commitment to be a whole church with emphasis on both inreach and outreach.*

2. Your commitment to others both in this community and throughout the world.
3. Your friendliness to others.
4. The energy you bring to worship.
5. Your desire to grow.

I am thankful for 40 years of this church's ministry. This anniversary gives us a chance to look back and be grateful for those who have given so much. At the same time, we will look ahead and commit ourselves to the ministry God has given the people of Providence.

In early January, Jay Casey announced that small groups had become “the newest thing” in many churches. For example, groups had been created to offer support, community, information and encouragement. During January and February 1994, Providence offered two such opportunities, Inreach Ministry Training and Teacher Training. The first seminar was designed to equip adult pastoral care leaders with skills to interact with persons facing life crises – substance abuse and divorce. The second seminar offered a weekly preview and preparation session for the new adult Formations Curriculum for Sunday School. Sunday School Director Wade Stokes and his council provided the leadership with the slogan “Healthy churches plan, while unhealthy churches solve problems.”

The Missions Committee's January-February 1994 local missions project was collecting blankets and towels for the Mecklenburg Winter Homeless Shelter.

The Adult Winter Bible Study, a two-night study of the Prophecy of Hosea, was held January 16 and 23. The January 16 session, entitled “The Love-Style of God,” was taught by Jay Casey, and the January 23 session on “The Call to Come Home” was taught by Pastor Bugg.

The January 10, 1994, *InReach* announced that Jay Casey had written the Lenten Sunday School lessons for the Adult Formations Literature. In addition, Minister of Music Lee Porter stated that on January 17-19, the North Carolina Baptist Church Music Conference would be held at the Caraway Conference Center. Lee and Drew Porter were the featured concert artists, and Debra Wallace led a session on “Elementary School Choirs.” Music Associate Greg Smith also serviced on one of the planning committees.

On February 1, 1994, the WMU sponsored a church-wide missions workday designed to be a full day of fellowship and service to the community. Some of the projects undertaken were: making dolls with removable hair for the Children's Cancer Unit at Presbyterian Hospital, making pillows and decorating pillow cases for nursing homes, daycare centers and making a quilt for the youth auction.

On February 5, a Parent-Youth Valentine Banquet was a fun time of fellowship and entertainment. The guest entertainer/singer was Ben Vogler, Minister of Youth at the First Baptist Church of Greensboro.

The Discipleship Training Seminars began on February 6, 1994, with classes for all ages. Jay Casey said that he was *particularly excited about Jim Sasser's course on Baptist History, which would cover the basics of Baptist faith ancestry, while giving some special attention to North Carolina and Mecklenburg Baptists' history, and Sandra Richardson's seminar aimed at single parents and their children.*

February 13-19, 1994, was Focus on WMU Week. The WMU 1994 Mission Statement was "We Serve God at Providence Baptist Church through Mission Friends, RA's, GA's, Acteens, Baptist Women, Young Baptist Women, and WMU Council." One of the week's highlights was the Mother-Daughter GA Banquet on February 17, with Ruby Fulbright as the featured speaker.

On February 25, 1994, the Better Homes Club invited members to "A Season of Love." The guest speaker, Dr. Lynn Wellons, presented "Grow Old With Me, The Best Is Yet To Be, Seasons of Marriage." The musical entertainment was by Lynn Hales.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was observed February 27-March 6, 1994, with the theme, "Minister in Christ's Name." The eight seminars focused upon Home Missions' needs across the nation and state. The Providence Annie Armstrong Missions Offering goal was \$8,000, and the funds were divided equally among the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Southern Baptist Convention, and Providence's youth mission project at the Uptown Baptist Church in Chicago.

On February 21, 1994, Jay Casey announced that Donna Garrison had joined the staff as Interim Weekday Ministries

Associate. As he stated: *Donna brings over 20 years experience in child care teaching operation, administration and ownership. She also brings a contagious warmth and sincerity wrapped around her interest in children. A special word of thanks goes to Missy Warren, Kathy Hunsucker and the entire teaching staff who kept the focus on the children and did the work of care with fewer hands.*

During March 1994, Providence had two community mission projects: (1) The collection of toiletry articles (foot and body powder, soap, shaving cream, razors, fingernail clippers, deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste) for needy men and women, and (2) "Providence feeds the Homeless at the Uptown Shelter" on March 31. Penny Hewett was the coordinator of this project.

At a called conference on March 13, 1994, the church approved raising \$40,000 for and building a Habitat for Humanity House as a part of the 40th Anniversary Celebration. As Jay Casey said: *This experience will bring Providence members together – one nail at a time – through fellowship, cooperative effort and Christian love.* The congregation also approved a job profile for a Minister with Children and the creation of a Minister of Education position.

On March 21, 1994, Pastor Bugg announced that Lee Porter, Minister of Music, had submitted his letter of resignation. Church member Greg Smith directed the music until May 1. Beginning May 4, Hal Shoemaker, former Minister of Music at Pritchard Memorial Baptist, became the Interim Minister of Music.

On April 9, 1994, the Children's Ministry Search Committee hosted a reception so that church members could meet Angela Clark, their candidate for Minister with Children. In addition, on April 10, Angela taught the children's sermons during the morning worship services.

Angela, a native of Kentucky, received her undergraduate degree from Murray State University and her Master of Arts in Christian Education from Southern Seminary. At the time of her visit, she was serving as Director of the Child Development Center at the First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee. In her resume, Angela stated:

Ministry with children and their families is a loving, relational experience. This one short statement summarizes one of the most important aspects of my approach to ministry.

With a healthy, growing relationship with God as the center of our lives, developing significant relationships with each preschooler and child, family and related leadership teams will be my foundational focus as we seek to minister together. I look forward to meeting you as we seek God's guidance in deciding the future of the relationships we are to develop together.

During the called church conference on April 10, 1994, the church voted to call Angela Clark as its new Minister with Children, effective May 22, 1994. The congregation also voted to name Rev. Gordon Weekley and Rev. Henry Crouch as Pastors Emeritus, and Paul Godfrey as Deacon Emeritus.

April 17, 1994, was Youth Sunday with the youth teaching Sunday School and leading both morning worship services. The preachers were Stephen Cook, Marc McCollum and Martha Wallace. The Chancel Choir led the special music, "The Lord Is My Shepherd."

On April 18, 1994, Associate Pastor Jay Casey announced that a new Sunday School class would begin on May 1 for couples in their twenties. The "twenty-something" leaders were Diane Bugg, Al Ledford and Chris Ledford.

On May 1, 1994, Pastor Bugg announced several staff changes. Hal Shoemaker would become the Interim Minister of Music. Greg Smith would continue to work with the Youth Choir, orchestra and other parts of the music program. Donna Garrison had joined the staff as Interim Weekday Ministry Associate. Missy Warren would leave her position as Administrative Assistant in the Weekday Ministry. Marie Irving would replace Missy in the Weekday Ministry and, lastly, Becky Stout, former Weekday Associate, would direct the 1994 Summer Enrichment Program.

Sunday, May 15, 1994, was the much anticipated 40th Anniversary Celebration entitled "Gratitude for the Past—Grace for the Future." The celebration began on May 14 with a banquet for charter members and former pastors — Dr. Frank Moore, Gordon Weekley and Henry Crouch. Gordon Weekley was the keynote speaker, and Henry Crouch preached the one morning service on May 15, entitled "Over the Hill or Just Beginning." A church-wide barbecue followed with good fellowship and fun enjoyed by all.

On May 16, 1994, it was announced that financial giving for the 40th Anniversary Habitat House Project had surpassed its goal of \$40,000 by almost \$6,000 with 1,032 persons participating. The actual construction would take place between September 17-October 1, 1994. Aubrey Arant and Rick Edwards were the project leaders.

In the May 16, 1994 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg welcomed Angela Clark to the staff as Minister with Children and summarized the 40th Anniversary efforts as follows:

Under the leadership of Bill Caldwell, the 40th Anniversary Committee and many others gave so much to the making of great memories.....What made this extra special was the number of people who contributed to this project. This says two vital things about our church: First, we are committed to ministry and, second, we can do almost anything that we want with God's help and our commitment to it.

May 1994 drew to a close with the High School Seniors Weekend on May 27-28, the annual Rafting Trip on the New River on May 29 led by Harold Eddins, and the announcement by Tommy Justus, Minister with Youth, that the Youth Mission Trip would be June 24-July 5, 1994, to Chicago's north side Uptown Baptist Church.

In the May 31, 1994 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg stated:

One of the exciting things about Providence is that we are trying to do things and are committed to try to do them better. That's the church at its best – not a group of folks who stay in the dugout but people who are on the field. Let me give you two examples of what I mean. Christa Moose, a member of our Missions Committee, organized a meeting of dental-medical folk in our fellowship. Twenty-seven attended. Others indicated interest in a Dental-Medical Fellowship and expressed a desire to serve in missions' projects. Thirteen volunteered to serve on a coordinating committee. A second example is Carolyn Leonard. She will leave for the Ukraine to be involved in a short-term mission project.

The annual Vacation Bible School was June 13-17, 1994, with the theme, "Under Construction, Building God's People." The

object was to teach and help the children to learn how God can use them in His ministry through mission work.

In the June 13, 1994 *InReach*, Jay Casey announced that Caron C. Clark had joined the staff as Weekday Ministry Associate, effective August 1. As he stated: *For the last 12 years she has directed a large child development center of a Baptist church in Arlington, Virginia. Caron brings to this ministry exceptional experience, maturity and personal warmth. More importantly, she views herself and her work as the ministry to which God has called her.*

Providence's local missions were on display in June 1994. Byrd Thompson was recognized for 15 years as coordinator of the Friendship Tray Volunteers. Catherine Rimmer was honored for 10,000 hours of service at the Charlotte Rehabilitation Center. In addition, the WMU began a kindergarten through sixth grade reading program at Jackson Park Baptist Church and continued to feed the hungry at the Uptown Shelter.

In a special called church conference on July 24, 1994, the church voted in favor of recommending Lee Gray to the Baptist Seminary in Richmond. Lee, the Summer Youth Associate, had felt the call to enter the ministry and would start in the fall.

Bill and Connie Andrews left on July 27 to serve six months at a Spanish speaking church in Brussels, where he would be Interim Pastor. Providence had a Prayer of Commitment for them during the July 24 worship services.

In the July 18, 1994 *InReach*, Business Administrator Richard Landers announced that he would be attending Union Seminary in Richmond during July and August to begin the certification process for church administrators.

During 1993 and 1994, Providence started and completed four renovation and construction projects. In 1993, the preschool playground was renovated and a Prayer Room constructed in honor of Jennifer Compton. In 1994, the Lillian Welling Resource Room, an area designated in 1993 for children's Sunday School needs, was completed. Construction of an older children's playground to accommodate children ages kindergarten through sixth grade was begun and completed in 1994. A generous gift from the Fletcher School aided this project.

Minister with Children Angela Clark announced that Caron Clark had joined the staff on August 1 as Weekday Ministries Associate. She added: *Yes, we are both Clarks but so far we have not found any relation other than our relation as members of God's family.*

In the August 18, 1994 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg announced that he and Jay Casey were planning a tour of the Holy Land in May 1995 and invited church members to participate. He also announced that Gardner-Webb University was awarding Gordon Weekley an honorary doctorate at their May Commencement. As he stated: *This means that both our former pastors have been honored by North Carolina universities. Henry Crouch was so recognized by Wake Forest University in 1981. Our heritage is rich.*

August 1994 drew to a close with the Leadership Appreciation Banquet on August 26 with the Sunday School teachers as special guests. The Sunday School Promotion Day on August 28 was a day of excitement and confusion.

Missions was in the news in August and September 1994. Bill and Connie Andrews were in Belgium. George Crouch had gone to Zaire to assist with the refugees from Rwanda, and Jim Shoemaker was helping the International Baptist Seminary as it relocated from Ruschlikon to Prague.

On the local front, Mary Harrison and Jewell Yancey were recognized for five years of service with Friendship Trays. Rachel Rentz was honored for her ten years of service.

In the August 29, 1994 *InReach*, Jay Casey in an article entitled "Community Service Commitment," stated:

It has been part of the Providence tradition for its ministers to be involved beyond the walls of this congregation and to serve in the wider community. I am happy to have the opportunity to continue that tradition as I serve this year as chaplain of the Charlotte Hornets. The Hornets' management has requested that I, along with another area minister, share the duties of scheduling the invocations for each home game, lead the pre-game chapel service for players and staff, and respond to the pastoral care needs of the players and their families. I am glad I can extend the

connection of Providence with the Hornets and add to this congregation's history of serving Charlotte.

During September and October 1994, the WMU sponsored three local mission projects: Collecting coats for students at Jackson Park Baptist Church, preparing and delivering meals to the Uptown Homeless Shelter, and a Reading Workshop. The workshop, led by Nancy Query, a Consultant for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, was designed for parents, grandparents, teachers, prospective tutors, mentors and friends of those learning to read.

A September Mission Report summarized it this way:

PROVIDENCE ON MISSION

Charlotte.....Jackson Park.....Belmont Community.....
 Chicago.....Chile.....Ukraine.....Belgium.....Zaire....
 ...Romania.....Panama.....Prague, Czech Republic.....
 Belarus.....Indonesia.....South Africa.....

September 1994 was a busy month at Providence. A Health Fair was held on September 10 for church members and the community, designed to give new and accurate information on personal health. Discipleship Training Seminars were held September 11-November 20 with sessions for all age groups, using the theme, "Something for Everyone." A new fellowship, the Monday Fellowship Breakfast, started on September 12. A new Sunday School class for couples 35-45 began on September 18 with leaders Dave and Karen Miller and Sharon Winstead.

The ninth annual Metropolitan Music Ministries Celebration of Music in Worship Services met at Providence on September 25. The sacred music concert featured six Charlotte area church choirs, and a reception followed the concert. Providence member Martha Iley was President of the Metropolitan Music Ministry.

Construction dates for the Providence Habitat House were September 16-October 1, 1994. The home was being built for Wanda Marshall and her three daughters. The sponsor family for the Marshalls was the John Bethea family – John, Pauline, Erica and Keith. The home was dedicated on site on October 16 in a very special, moving service.

The North Carolina Missions Offering emphasis began the week of September 25, 1994, to support the State Missions, activities and ministries. The 1994 Providence goal was \$2,500.

The 1995 Stewardship Campaign theme to pledge the new budget was "SOAR in '95: Sharing Our Abundant Resources." Commitment Day was November 13, 1994.

On October 16, 1994, Providence youth participated in the annual Charlotte Crop Walk to fight hunger. Church members completed Sponsor Forms, pledging a monetary sum for each mile walked by a young person. That evening there was an Inreach Training Seminar with Dr. Bill Poston, a Pathologist at Presbyterian Hospital, speaking on the medical knowledge and understanding of HIV/AIDS and its treatment and cure. The next Inreach Training Seminar was scheduled for November 6 with Rev. Harold Hudson, Hospice of Charlotte Chaplain, as guest speaker.

In the October 10, 1994 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg announced that the Mecklenburg Baptist Association had a new name, Baptist Metrolina Ministries. He congratulated Rod Coward who had served as President of the Mecklenburg Baptist Association Board during the previous year.

The annual Providence Fall Festival on October 29, 1994, was a treat for the entire family, an evening of church-wide fun and fellowship.

At the October 30, 1994, quarterly church conference, the members approved the 1995 budget of \$1,929,000, voted a change in title from Weekday Ministries Associate to Minister of Weekday Education (Caron Clark), and a Foreign Mission goal of \$40,000.

The November 1994 Providence Mission Project was to assist Jennifer Brannon's return to China. She had requested items such as air fresheners, lipstick, panty hose, and deodorant for the Chinese people. The WMU also collected medical supplies for Romania that would be delivered at the end of November by a physician.

Sunday, November 13, 1994, marked Chuck Bugg's first anniversary as pastor. In the November 7 *InReach*, the Pastor Search Committee stated:

This past year has been a good year for Providence. Attendance by members and visitors at both worship and Sunday School has increased, and new members have been added. Several mission projects have been completed. Overall, there has been an excellent spirit of cooperation and commitment within the fellowship.....We affirm that the

future holds great possibilities for Providence as we unite to further the cause of Christ in Charlotte and elsewhere.

Pledge Day on November 13 generated 444 cards returned, totaling \$1,518,333 or 78.7% of the 1995 budget. More work needed to be done to complete the SOAR Campaign.

The Better Homes Club held a Harvest of Thanksgiving Banquet on November 18, 1994. The guest speaker, Rev. Bo Prosser from Raleigh, presented "When the Kids Are Crying, the Phone is Ringing, the Dog is Barking....." The entertainment was provided by Hal Shoemaker and Susan Plonk, accompanied by Marty Gregory.

The annual Community Thanksgiving Service was held at Providence United Methodist Church on November 23, with Pastor Bugg and the Sanctuary Choir participating in the service.

A special called church conference was held on November 20, 1994, for the purpose of calling a Minister of Education. The congregation voted to call Rev. Bo Prosser and he accepted the call, effective March 1, 1995. As Pastor Bugg stated in the November 28, 1994 ***InReach***:

Bo, his wife Gail, and daughters Jamie and Katie are wonderful folks. Bo comes to us with impressive credentials and references. All who speak of him talk about his personal concern, his organizational skills, and his motivational ability. As Bo and his family get ready to leave their present church, Forest Hills in Raleigh, and come to us, we want to be in prayer for them. Transitions are always stressful, but we are glad that the Prosser family is coming our way.

The 1994 Advent Season began on November 27 with the lighting of the Candle of Hope. Rev. Tommy Justus preached the sermon, entitled "The Surprise of Christmas." The music was provided by Karen Miller and the String Ensemble directed by Martha Player.

December 4 was the second Sunday of Advent with the lighting of the Candle of Peace. Pastor Bugg preached the sermon entitled "The Shock of Christmas." The music was provided by the Rejoice Trio (Debbi Grosch, Randy Neel and Sharon UpDyke) and the Sanctuary Choir. That evening, "The Celebration of Christmas Through the Eyes of a Child" by the Youth Choirs was directed by

Hal Shoemaker and accompanied by Kathy Sipe (piano) and Marty Gregory (organ). The guitarists were Karen Edwards and Jim Garrett.

The Week of Prayer for Global Missions was held December 4-11 with daily prayer sessions and study groups led by the WMU. The Providence goal was \$40,040.40 in honor of the church's 40th Anniversary. The week concluded with the Missions Leadership Banquet and Program on December 10. The guest speaker was Dr. Cecil Sherman, Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and former Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Asheville. Dr. Sherman also preached the third Advent Sermon, "The Case for Cooperative Missions," on December 11.

On December 18, 1994, Dr. Bugg preached the fourth Advent Sermon entitled "The Significance of Christmas." The Candle of Love was lit, and the Sanctuary Choir sang the Christmas Concert, along with the Sanctuary Bells, Young Musicians, duet by Debbi Grosch and Randy Neel and solos by Cheryl Pappas, Sarah Watson and Bill Caldwell.

A Christmas Eve Service was held on December 24, with Dr. Bugg's sermon, "The Baby Who Would Be King," and Christmas Carols sung by the Sanctuary and Chancel Choirs. The service ended with Communion and a Candlelight Service. On December 25, there was only one service at 10:00 am. Dr. Bugg preached "The Silence of Christmas" with musical support from the Sanctuary Choir and solo by Hal Shoemaker.

During Pastor Bugg's absence in 1994, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Dr. Jay Casey, Associate Pastor

Dr. Henry Crouch, Pastor Emeritus of Providence

Rev. Tommy Justus, Minister with Youth

Dr. Cecil Sherman, Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Atlanta

The year 1995 began with the Service of Epiphany at 10:00 am on January 1 and designated as Student Day at Christmas. The music was provided by the Chancel and College Choirs, highlighted by a duet by Betsy DeLaddy and Chris Morris, accompanied on the piano by Lee Pangle.

The January 9, 1995, *InReach* carried a letter from Bo Prosser, the new Minister of Education:

Thank you for your many expressions of affirmation and excitement about the coming ministry together. We have much to do to impact our community and our congregation. Christian education is exciting. Learning and growing together is going to be fun! My 'idea' folder is already bulging in preparation and anticipation of my start-up. Loving and laughing together is going to be FUN!

It truly would as the years passed.

A three-part training series for Inreach Leaders and church members began on January 15. Session I was entitled "Signs of Alcohol Abuse, How Friends Can Intervene" with Candace Flanagan and Katherine Townsend, local Substance Abuse Counselors. Session II, scheduled for February 19, was "Family Dynamics and Teenage Alcohol Abuse." Session III, scheduled for March 19, was "How Adult Children of Alcoholics Can Overcome Their Past."

The Winter Bible Study was held on January 22, 1995, with Dr. Jim Somerville, Pastor of the Wingate Baptist Church, teaching one of Paul's most compelling letters, the book of Galatians. As Jay Casey stated in the January 16 *InReach*: *Its message of Christian freedom is relevant personally and corporately. You will enjoy Jim Somerville's creative style and warm personality as a teacher.*

In the same *InReach*, Pastor Bugg stated his belief that Providence needed to focus on two groups of people: the large group of single persons and Providence's older members, especially shut-ins. More people and ministry efforts would be directed toward these and other groups as the church's ministry expanded.

On January 12, a "new" Providence first took place, the Prime-Timers' Luncheon. Over 80 persons attended, and they agreed to meet the second Thursday of each month at 11:45 am for a program and lunch. At the February 9 meeting, the guest speaker was former member and noted entertainer Arthur Smith, talking about "Love."

The Better Homes Club meeting on January 27, 1995, was entitled "An Evening In Winter Wonderland" with entertainment

provided by Bruce and Sharon UpDyke. The guest speaker was Dr. Robert Johnston, a marriage and family counselor, speaking on "How To Build A Caring Home."

January 1995 ended and February began with the Pictorial Directory scheduling and photography sessions. Members were enticed to participate with the offer of a free 8x10 color portrait.

A new session on the "Introduction to Baptist Ideas," taught by Roberta Teachey, began on February 12 and ran through March 12. The five-week series was designed for new members.

The Providence WMU sponsored a church-wide Missions Workshop on February 7 for a full day of fun, projects, fellowship, food and experiencing the fulfillment of helping others. The workday theme was "Providence Has A Heart for Missions," which coincided with the January-February Missions Collection Project through the Health Care Fellowship ministering to Jackson Park Baptist members by sponsoring the Medical/Dental Bus of North Carolina for a free day of medical care in April.

The two primary February 1995 events were the Mother-Daughter GA Banquet on February 16 and the Parent-Youth Valentine Banquet on February 18. The banquet entertainment was by Matt Fore, a professional magician and entertainer.

In the February 6, 1995 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg discussed the 1996 plans and advantages of having a Billy Graham Crusade in Charlotte:

I am pleased that Billy Graham may come to Charlotte, and I want to tell you several reasons why I hope we will support this. First, Dr. Graham acknowledges his calling as an 'evangelist,' and his preaching is designed to introduce people to Christ. He focuses on this and makes the Gospel simple to understand.

Second, Billy Graham has maintained a ministry of integrity. None of us has agreed with everything he's done and said, but he has certainly been a person of whom those in the Christian community could be proud. With all of his honors, Billy Graham seems to have maintained his humility.

Third, a crusade like this gives churches of many different stripes a chance to work together. Racial, gender, denominational and other barriers are overcome as

Christians focus on reaching out to the community. It will be vital to the total success of the crusade for 'mainstream' churches such as ours to be involved.

Finally, Charlotte is Billy Graham's home. Dr. Graham is 75 years old. He suffers from Parkinson's disease, and while it is under control, the fact is that Billy Graham will not be able to go on forever. It will be fitting, and it will be helpful to our community for him to come home.

The two February 1995 local mission projects were collecting old blankets and towels for the Winter Shelter and hosting the American Red Cross Blood Mobile Van. The visit was sponsored by the Health Care Fellowship.

February 26, 1995, was Children's Day with the theme, "And a Child Shall Lead Them." The music was provided by the Children's Choirs and Children's Choir Chimes. The day concluded with the "Pastor's Pals" Ice Cream Social.

March 1995 began with seminars entitled *Providence Shares, Recovering From Divorce* by Brenda and Joe Helms; *Handling A Faith Crisis* by Debbi Grosch and Bonnie Adams; and *Coping With Grief and Loss* by Carolyn Leonard and Karen Miller.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions March 7-9 included Bible study, prayer sessions and a Home Missions Study taught by Rev. Kevin Smith, Pastor of Jackson Park Baptist Church. The Providence Home Mission goal for 1995 was \$9,000.

On March 12, 1995, the Student Ministry sponsored a Youth Barbecue advertised to be real beef barbecue prepared by Jeff Summers. The profit would be used to support the Youth Summer Mission Trip.

The March 1995 local missions focus was upon collecting toiletry articles and socks for the Uptown Shelter. In addition, casseroles were prepared and served at the Uptown Shelter for Homeless Men.

The March 24, 1995, Better Homes Club program was entitled "Better Vacations" with a focus on: family vacations, traveling with children, long weekends and anniversary trips. The entertainment was provided by the Providence Cabaret Singers.

The March 6, 1995, *InReach* carried a note from Bo Prosser, the new Minister of Education, which stated: *It's Providential! How*

excited we are to be with you! Our first Sunday was filled with warm hugs and friendly faces. Thank you for loving us. Be sure to keep telling us your names! Thanks for your graciousness.

In the March 13 ***InReach***, Bo defined his expectations and the church's in his role as Minister of Education as *loving, listening, learning and laughing. My ministry is one of love and laughter.*

The Minister of Music Search Committee, chaired by Bill Caldwell, announced in the March 13, 1995 ***InReach***, that it was ready to make a recommendation. The candidate and his family would visit the weekend of March 24-26, and he would lead the morning worship services. That evening in a special called church conference, the congregation would vote on issuing a call to the candidate. In the April 3 ***InReach***, Pastor Bugg stated that the congregation had voted unanimously to call Doug Haney as the new Minister of Music, effective June 1, 1995. Doug's family consisted of wife, Lori, and children, Christopher and Meredith. He went on to say that, during the interim period: *We have been tremendously blessed by Hal and Rennie Shoemaker's presence. Hal has led us superbly and has endeared himself to all of us. I'm glad that Hal will continue to lead our music until Doug arrives.*

In the March 20, 1995 ***InReach***, Pastor Bugg stated:

Many of you knew Kitty Crouch when she was a part of Providence. She was a 'second mother' to Henry and an inspiration to many folks. I only met her briefly, but you could sense her radiance. She died on February 27, and we extend our care and prayers to Henry and his family. Henry wrote a moving eulogy to Kitty, which follows:

Last week we buried Katie (Kitty) Maddry Crouch. She was a second mother to me and for almost 25 years a part of our family. She was a great lady and I will miss her in many ways.

Kitty married my father in 1969 and served as a partner while he served Baptists as a denominational leader. She later served as a pastor's wife in a mission station in Charlotte. She nursed him in a lingering illness that made her a widow for a second time.

A dedicated church woman, she served at every stage of her life the church in every possible way. Her talents

and abilities were God given, but her dedication to the task was her commitment. Even while living at Brookridge Retirement Home in Winston-Salem, she served as a Sunday School teacher at Ardmore Baptist Church.

She loved her family, having shared three children by her marriage to Rev. Charles Maddry. She was devotedly loved by all her kin. What an inspiration to us, and what a privilege to have her as a mother. For 85 years, she lived a noble life and deserved the promotion. We rejoice in her achievements and give thanks for her life!

Henry Crouch

The March 31-April 2, 1995, Spiritual Life Conference was led by Dr. E. Glen Hinson. Dr. Hinson taught at Southern Seminary for 32 years in addition to many other colleges throughout the country. He was currently serving as a Professor at Baptist Seminary in Richmond, where he taught Church History, Spirituality and Worship.

From March 13-15, 1995, Aubrey Arant led an enthusiastic team of Providence construction and landscaping volunteers to improve facilities at the North Carolina WMU Camp in Asheboro. Some worked for a day, but most of the group spent three days at scenic Camp Mundo Vista.

In the March 27, 1995 ***InReach***, Pastor Bugg stated: *One of the things which several of the churches in our community sponsor is a series of Lenten Services. The final one will be held on April 5 at Providence United Methodist. I will be preaching at this service; Hal will be singing, and Jay will be serving as worship leader.*

The April 1995 local missions projects were helping stock the shelves and working in the Loaves and Fishes facility at the Galilean Baptist Church. In addition, there was a church-wide collection project of nonperishable foods for the Jackson Park Baptist Church, led by Christa Moose and the WMU.

At the 1995 Maundy Thursday Service on April 13, the Lord's Supper was observed and the Sanctuary Choir presented Dubois' sacred cantata, "The Seven Last Words of Christ," directed by Hal Shoemaker and accompanied by Marty Gregory. The soloists were: Bill Caldwell, Teresa Henry, Max Howie, Debbi Grosch, Matt

Middlebrooks, Bruce UpDyke and Sarah Watson.

The PrimeTimers met on Thursday for lunch, and the guest speaker was church member and Charlotte Hornets' owner George Shinn. The special music was by George Hamilton, IV, former member and Country Music Ambassador to Europe.

April 23, 1995, was Special Education Recognition Sunday, the congregation's first opportunity to hear Bo Prosser preach. His topic was "What's Next?" For the worship service, Lowell Dotson sang "He That Dwelleth in the Secret Place."

At the quarterly church conference on April 30, 1995, Deacon Chair Hunter Cook recommended that the congregation approve one worship service at 10:00 am for the summer months. After lengthy discussion, the congregation approved the deacon recommendation.

May 1-7, 1995, was Senior Adult Recognition Week with the theme, "Gratitude for the Past.....Grace for the Future." The week's festivities included a May Day Tea, a Grab Bag Trip to the Van Landingham Gardens, a Men's Golf Outing at Cedarwood and Senior Adult Recognition Day on May 7.

The May 1, 1995, ***InReach*** announced that Associate Pastor Jay Casey would lead a ten-member Providence-Prague Partnership Team July 22-August 5 to assist in the renovation of a campus to be occupied by the International Baptist Theological Seminary. The project was jointly sponsored by the North Carolina Baptist Men and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

On May 1, 1995, Business Administrator Richard Landers announced his resignation, effective May 19, to accept a call to serve as Business Administrator at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Pastor Bugg stated: *Richard has done an excellent job for us these past three years. He has worked hard and done many things that are behind the scenes but vital to the life of the church. He and his family will continue to be vital members of Providence.*

May 1995 was a busy and exciting month. It began with the Youth Auction and Yard Sale on May 13, with the proceeds to support the Summer Mission Trip to Chicago. Next, the College Mission Trip to Washington, D. C. was May 15-18. The month concluded with High School Seniors Weekend May 26-28, which included a rafting trip on the New River, Seniors Breakfast, and Graduate Recognition Service.

Business Administrator Richard Landers announced on May 8 that Elaine Frauenhofer had joined the staff as Food Service Director/Chef. Elaine was a very experienced food service person and brought a new element to Providence meals. Her husband, Dennis, was also an experienced chef who assisted Elaine.

Providence celebrated its 41st Anniversary on Sunday, May 21. Charter members were recognized during the morning worship services, and everyone enjoyed the food and fellowship at the dinner-on-the-grounds.

The Music Ministry, led by Hal Shoemaker, joined with First Baptist Church of Belmont, led by Greg Smith, in two performances of Mendelssohn's "Elijah for Young Voices" on May 21 and 24. The concert featured the Young Musicians Choirs from both churches. Jan Smith directed the Providence Young Musicians with accompaniment from Jana Harston.

May 28, 1995, was Hal Shoemaker's last Sunday as Interim Minister of Music. In the May 22 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg stated: *A little over a year ago, Hal Shoemaker came to be our Interim Minister of Music. During that time, we have come to love and appreciate Rennie and him. He has done everything I had hoped for and far more. As Hal concludes his ministry, we bid him God's deepest blessings and our most profound gratitude.*

In the same *InReach*, Hal responded:

The joy that I have experienced in these past 13 months can never be expressed in mere words. I hope that you can feel in your hearts what I feel in mine.....that these have been very special moments between very special people. Rennie and I have found love, joy and acceptance here and many, many new friends. You have made this 'interim' experience something so special it will last us a lifetime. Thank you.....Thank you.....Thank you!

Doug Haney, the new Minister of Music, held his first practice with the Sanctuary Choir on May 31. His first Sunday directing the choir was June 4, 1995.

The May 1995 local missions project was collecting non-perishable staple foods for Jackson Park Baptist Church. In a column entitled "A Reason for Pride," Jay Casey stated: *I want to commend those members who participated in the Tutoring Project at Jackson*

Park Baptist Church. Over 40 of you gave yourselves faithfully to the lives of disadvantaged children.....A special thanks goes to Mary Ann Crouch for her superb leadership in this project.

On June 4, 1995, Providence began a new summer worship schedule entitled "Great Day in the Morning." Sunday School was at 8:45 am with one morning worship service at 10:00 am. The new Wednesday night schedule included dinner at 5:30 pm and prayer and Bible study at 6:30 pm. June 4 was also Doug Haney's first Sunday as Minister of Music.

Vacation Bible School was held June 12-16, 1995, with the theme, "Marketplace 29 A.D., A Bible-times Experience." Angela Clark, beginning her second year, led the program.

During the first week of June 1995, the air conditioning system serving the Children's Building gave out, and the estimated downtime was 6-8 weeks. Bo Prosser asked for the prayers and patience of church members during the breakdown time.

In the June 5 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg announced that he felt the need for continuing education and would be going to the Princeton Theological Seminary June 19-29. He concluded his announcement as follows: *I'm reminded of the preacher who was leaving for sabbatical and stated, 'I don't have another unpreached thought left.' I hope to get some more thoughts while I'm away.*

On June 13, 1995, Minister with Students Tommy Justus announced that Katie Porter would be the Student Summer Intern. Katie was from Arkansas and a senior at Queens College, majoring in Communications.

The June 1995 local missions projects were collecting clothing and personal items for the Uptown Shelter for Homeless Men and making and serving meals for the Uptown Shelter for the Homeless. Penny Hewett coordinated the two projects.

June 1995 was Missions Month. First, the Chicago Youth Mission Trip was July 14-25. Forty adults and youth were prepared to minister to the children of Chicago at Backyard Bible Clubs, minister to senior adults at Sonshine Clubs, and do physical labor at Uptown Baptist Church. Second, the Providence-Prague Partnership Team Project was July 22-August 5. The Commissioning Service was held on July 16, following the morning worship service. The team would assist in renovation of the campus to be occupied by the

International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague. The ten team members were: Buddy Bennight, David Carpenter, Jay Casey, Bill Fairley, Bob and Diana Gillespie, Betty and Bill Griffin, Debbie Morris and Mike Walker. In addition to prayer partnerships, Providence raised \$21,000 for the project. Lastly, the July church-wide collection project sponsored by the WMU was children's winter coats and thick gloves that were sent to the children of Belarus.

In the July 17, 1995 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg announced that Eric Welborne, a Providence youth, was going to spend a year in Senegal, Africa, in mission work. In addition, he stated that Bo Prosser had written several of the Sunday School lessons for August in the *Formations Books* published by Smyth & Helwys.

In the August 7, 1995 *InReach*, Bo Prosser announced that Kenneth Barnett had a new job title – Facilities Manager. Kenneth was responsible for managing the many aspects of the buildings and grounds.

In the August 14, 1995 *InReach*, Tommy Justus announced his resignation as Minister with Youth:

It has been a privilege to serve you for the past five years. It has been wonderful, particularly the youth and the youth ministry leadership. So, it is with extremely mixed feelings that I offer this letter of resignation, effective September 30, 1995. My last day will be September 10. I am leaving you to become the Pastor of Mars Hill Baptist Church.

In the same *InReach*, Pastor Bugg stated: *We will miss Tommy. He's been an excellent colleague on the staff, always upbeat and willing to do what needs to be done. We wish him and his family the very best.*

Providence returned to its regular worship schedule on Sunday, August 27, 1995, with 8:30 and 11:00 am worship services. Sunday School returned to 9:45 am.

In the August 21, 1995 *InReach*, Pastor Bugg announced that Phillippa Mathis had been employed as Interim Minister with Students and would begin September 1, giving her some overlap time with Tommy Justus. Phillippa had prior experience as a Minister of Youth and had served in youth conferences both in North Carolina and throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

On August 27, the Sanctuary Choir presented "Amen, An Evening of Spirituals," directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Marty Gregory. The soloists were Bill Caldwell, David Carpenter, Gary Grant, Susan Page and Sharon UpDyke.

On August 28, 1995, Activities Minister Bobby Butler announced that Pam Hicks, Secretary for the Activities and Student Ministries, had chosen to work fewer hours and would continue part-time with the Student Ministry.

Four adult groups for Sharing and Support began in September 1995, with the theme, "Caring-Confidential-Convenient." The four seminars were: *Helping Someone Who's Depressed*, *Divorce Recovery*, *Career Crisis*, and *Dealing With Grief and Loss*.

On September 2, 1995, the Weekday Education Full-Care Program celebrated its ten-year anniversary. Under the leadership of Ed Landrus, Minister with Children, the Full-Care Program opened on September 2, 1985, with two rooms, one for infants and one for one-year olds, totaling 25 children. In 1995, the program operated with 81 children, seven classes and 22 teachers. Jeanne Knight, current Transition Baby Teacher, was the first employee of the Full-Care Program, and also celebrated her ten-year anniversary. Along with Jeanne Knight, B. C. and Jackie Cromer, Debbie Garrett, Penny Hewett and Carolyn Yates also served as originating employees of the program.

The 1995 Weekday Education Ministry also offered a Preschool for Babies through transition Kindergarten, a Summer Preschool and Summer Enrichment Program. Caron Clark was Director of the Weekday Education Ministry. Ed Landrus, in 2004, still worked with the ministry part-time.

Tommy Justus had worked hard during his tenure to develop the position of Minister to International Students in Charlotte. That dream became a reality on September 7, 1995, when Rev. Dan McClintock was installed at a special service at Providence. Keith Parks, Missions Coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and Roy Smith, Executive Director of the North Carolina Baptist Convention, were the featured speakers at the Commissioning Service.

The Week of Prayer for State Missions was held September 10-17, 1995. The funds given through this offering went to support

Baptist agencies and institutions across North Carolina. The Providence offering goal was \$2,500.

On September 11, 1995, the *InReach Newsletter* got a new name and a different format. As Pastor Bugg stated in the September 11 *Connections*

*You will notice that our newsletter has a new look and a new name. I'm grateful for the work that Bo Prosser and Lu Fowler have done in putting this together. I especially like the name, **Connections**. That really embraces what a newsletter should do. It connects us to programs and activities. In a church our size, a lot is going on. We want you to be aware of what's happening!*

The September 11 *Connections* announced that Luther Bigby had been called as Business Manager. However, there was no information about his training or previous employment.

On September 20, 1995, there was a Women on Mission Kickoff Celebration. The WMU announced that the former BW and BYW groups had merged into Women on Mission. The guest speakers were Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries Jan and Kevin Rutledge who were serving in the Czech Republic.

During the 11:00 am worship service on September 17, 1995, a Commissioning Service was held for two mission teams. First, the Venezuela Team was composed of Inez Arant, Dolores and John Gaskin, Christa Moose and Marti Todd. Second, the Tanzania Team was composed of George and Mary Ann Crouch. It was another example of the "Providence Has a Heart for Missions" theme.

In the September 18, 1995 *Connections*, Doug Haney announced that Pat Long had been hired as the new Organist-Music Associate. She came to the Music Ministry from Dilworth United Methodist where she had been Director of Music and Organist. As he stated: *Pat brings to us a balance of outstanding musicianship and a sense of calling to minister to people through music.* He also expressed his appreciation to Marty Gregory (organ) and Kathy Sipe (piano) for their nearly two years of interim service to the Music Ministry.

October 1995 began with two major workshops. First, on October 1 the Sunday School Training Workshop provided sessions for all ages, taught by Baptist specialists from Georgia and

Tennessee. Second, the Baptist Center for Ethics Leadership and Integrity Workshop was October 2-3. The Plenary speakers were: Leonard Sweet, Chancellor of United Theological Seminary of Dayton, Ohio; Bob Dale, Director for the Center of Creative Church Leadership Development of Richmond, Virginia; and Larry Donnithorne, President of the College of the Albemarle, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

The 1996 Stewardship Emphasis was held October 15-29, 1995, with the theme, "God's Gift: Our First Response." The 1996 budget was \$2,028,730. Pledge Sunday was March 22, with Celebration Sunday and the Celebration Meal on October 29. Doug Paschal, Chair of the Stewardship Committee, headed the campaign.

The two October 1995 local missions projects were collecting tutoring supplies and children's clothes for Jackson Park Baptist Church and collecting ball point pens for the Women's Correctional Facility in Raleigh. Penny Hewett supervised the projects sponsored by the WMU.

The final October 1995 activity was the annual Fall Festival of fun and games for the entire family. Bobby Butler and the activities staff coordinated the festival events.

The Inreach Ministry Training Seminar Focus on November 5 was "Understanding the Unique Needs of Blended Families." The guest speaker was Dr. Gary MacFarland, a Counselor at the Baptist Counseling Center.

On November 10-12, 1995, the Single Adult Weekend theme was "Surviving the Holidays." The guest presenter was Dr. Harold Ivan Smith, a nationally acclaimed expert on ministering to single adults.

The primary November church collection project was Operation Christmas Child. Church members were asked to fill shoe boxes with Christmas gifts for children in Bosnia and Rwanda. Other local mission efforts were feeding the homeless at the Uptown Shelter and bringing canned goods for the Loaves and Fishes Ministry.

On November 17, 1995, the Better Homes Club sponsored a program entitled "Schools and Families: Partners in Raising Children." The guest speaker was Dr. Dennis Williams, Deputy Superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Doug Haney provided the entertainment.

On November 14, 1995, Chuck Bugg completed his second anniversary as pastor. As he stated in the November 13 *Connections*: *As I complete two years here, I'm grateful for you and for the generosity of your support.....The great strength of this congregation is not in the pulpit or the pastor's office. It's in you.....Whoever is pastor at Providence is blessed.*

On November 9, 1995, a new Automated Assistance Telephone System was installed. The two main features of the new system were additional capacity for incoming and outgoing calls and Voice Mail System.

At the November 29, 1995, Wednesday evening service, Dr. David Hopper, President of the International Seminary in Prague, was the guest speaker. Dr. Hopper thanked Providence and the ten members who worked in relocating the seminary and discussed the impact that the seminary was making in Europe.

December 4-8, 1995, was the Week of Prayer for World Missions with daily prayer meetings led by Bo Prosser. The week concluded with a Missions Banquet on December 6 with guest speaker Grace P. Freeman, CBF Associate Missions Coordinator. The Providence World Missions goal was \$40,000.

The Christmas Season began on Sunday, December 3, with Pastor Bugg's sermon entitled "The Mood of Christmas," and special music by the Sanctuary Bells, Sanctuary Choir and solo by Sharon UpDyke. That evening the congregation was treated to the children's program entitled "Christmas Tapestry," presented by the Young Musicians, Trinity Singers, Music Makers, Melody Makers and Providence Chimes. Debra Wallace, Children's Choir Coordinator, directed the program.

On Sunday evening, December 10, 1995, Jay Casey led a Memorial Service for those who grieve. The service theme was "From Hurt to Hope." Doug Haney provided the music.

Providence began a Minister-on-Call Program on Friday, December 8, 1995. As Jay Casey explained in the *Connections*: *If you have an emergency and wish to have one of our ministers present or if you learn of another member's need and know it is important that we be alerted to their situation, you should call the 'On Call' minister.....On Call weekends for the ministers run from Friday through Monday, 9:00 am.*

The church-wide Christmas mission project was participating in the Charlotte Police Department's Christmas Project, with its goal of reaching 500+ families with hams, canned goods and wrapped gifts for infants-adults. Distribution day was December 21, 1995.

Sunday, December 17, 1995, was the highlight day of the Christmas Season. During the two morning services, the special music was by the Sanctuary Bells, Sanctuary Choir and Adult Ensemble. That evening at 6:00 pm, the Sanctuary Choir presented Handel's "Messiah," joined by a nine-member orchestra, primarily from the Charlotte Symphony. It was a truly marvelous performance. Doug Haney directed the performance and was accompanied by Pat Long.

December 1995 closed with the Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service on December 24 and the Epiphany Service at 10:00 am on December 31. Pastor Bugg's message was entitled "The Messiah of Christmas."

During Pastor Bugg's absence in 1995, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Jay Casey, Associate Pastor

Dr. Glen Hinson, Professor, Baptist Seminary in Richmond

Rev. Tommy Justus, Minister with Students

Rev. Bo Prosser, Minister of Education

Dr. Harold Ivan Smith, Single Adult Specialist Speaker

Rev. Kevin Smith, Pastor, Jackson Park Baptist Church

January 1996, at Providence, began with a church-wide mission project to collect blankets and towels for the Emergency Homeless Shelter. Mission volunteers were also needed to do carpentry and landscaping at Camp Mundo Vista – no skills were necessary.

On January 9, 1996, Pastor Bugg announced that Betty and Frank Gilreath had been appointed by the International Executive Service Corps for a two-month project in Zimbabwe, Africa. Their departure date was January 11.

Minister of Education Bob Prosser announced that three new Sunday School classes would begin on January 14: "Ladies 55 and Older" taught by Nancy Bennight, "Couples 38 and Older" taught by Debbi Grosch, and an elective class, "A History of Baptist Work," taught by Jim Sasser.

The Winter Bible Study was held on January 21 with guest teacher Dr. Randall Lolley, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Greensboro. He led the congregation in a two-hour study of the book of Amos. Dr. Lolley's name, even today, is synonymous with leadership, integrity, and the best that Baptists represent.

In closing January worship services, Pastor Bugg began using a new benediction that he once heard in a sermon preached by Fred Craddock and modified somewhat on his own. The benediction was:

Live simply,
 Love generously,
 Speak truthfully,
 Care deeply,
 Pray daily,
 And leave the rest to God.

February 1996 began with the return of the popular Wednesday night seminars on February 7. The seven seminars ranged from *The Parables of Jesus* (Jay Casey) to *Sunday School for Sunday School Teachers* (Bo Prosser).

February provided two mission opportunities for church members. The first was to prepare and help serve food at the Uptown Homeless Shelter. The second was to serve as a host family for six weeks to children from Belarus.

Church services were canceled twice in January and February 1996 due to bad weather. A severe winter storm closed the church on January 7. Bitterly cold weather on February 4 led to canceled services.

WMU Focus Week was held February 11-17, 1996. Pastor Bugg had high praise for the work of the WMU in the February 5 **Connections**: *I have said it before, but it is worth repeating. I can't imagine a church that has a better WMU than Providence. Women of all ages are involved. They challenge us to reach the world even as they lead us to reach our community.* Sally Higgins, WMU Director, stated: *We will celebrate God's blessings during our Week of Prayer for Home Missions from March 3-9.*

In the February 19, 1996 **Connections**, the Denominational Issues Committee gave a status report on Baptist seminaries: *With plans underway for opening no later than the year 2000, Wake*

Forest becomes another North Carolina Baptist school to provide education and training for future leaders of our churches. Both Campbell and Gardner-Webb now have Divinity Schools, and a Tri-State School of Theology for the Deaf has opened at the Ridgecrest Conference Center.

On February 9-10, 1996, 19 Providence men and women received a Mundo Vista thanks. They participated in a volunteer mission project to renovate the cabins at Camp Mundo Vista. In addition, the Harriet Lennon Bible Study Group and the Connie Andrews Prayer Group provided food and refreshments for the workers.

Sunday, March 4, 1996, marked two special events at Providence. The first was Children's Day, and the second was the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Home Missions. The Providence offering goal was \$9,000. Three thousand dollars would go to the Uptown Baptist Church in Chicago to help with the youth mission work; \$3,000 would go to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and the remainder to the Annie Armstrong Offering of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The annual Youth Barbecue was held on March 10, 1996, and featured Jeff Summers' award-winning barbecue. The profits would be used for the Chicago Mission Trip.

Myers Park Baptist hosted the annual meeting of the Alliance of Baptists March 14-16, 1996, which featured Dr. Glenn Hinson, Professor of Spirituality and Church History at the Baptist Seminary at Richmond. Dr. Hinson spoke at Providence in 1995 and was well received. Providence members were invited to attend the Alliance meetings without paying the registration fee.

Bo Prosser, Minister of Education, announced that following a recent retreat, the Sunday School Council and Deacon Education Emphasis Group had formulated a Sunday School Mission Statement:

The Mission Vision for the Bible Teaching Ministry of Providence Baptist Church: Teaching and Sharing Faith Development to Encourage Salvation, Fellowship, Ministry, and Christian Growth.

The March 1996 Providence Mission Collection Project was collecting children's books, coloring books and crayons for Jackson

Park Baptist Church. In addition, dishcloths, kitchen towels and used Christian music (compact discs or tapes) were collected for Mark and Susan Andrews to take to Chile.

March 1, 1996, marked Bo Prosser's first anniversary as Minister of Education. His response was: *Thank you for your expressions of friendship and affirmation this first year! I can't believe we've already been together for a year. How time flies!* He also announced that he was going to lead a Men's Bible Study at 6:30 am on Thursday mornings. He concluded as follows: *This is a real sacrifice for a night owl!! Are you interested?*

In the March 18, 1996 **Connections**, Pastor Bugg announced that the Deacon Board had approved a Providence Memorial Project and appointed a committee to plan the project, which would provide a site for lasting memorials to the church's deceased members. The planning committee would consider the design, site, construction, financing, maintenance, and policy issues related to the project and then report their recommendations to the church for approval.

On March 25, 1996, the Providence Denominational Issues Committee announced church members serving on Denominational Agency and Institution Boards:

Alliance of Baptists	Pauline Bethea
Baptist Children's Home	Paula Withrow
Baptist Seminary at Richmond	Ken Hall
Campbell University	Lee Royal
Gardner-Webb University	John Bethea, Tom Philson
General Board	Frank Gilreath
Mars Hill College	Sam Rutland
Meredith College	Earl Pope, Ron Withrow

From March 12-14, 1996, 15 Providence members worked at Camp Mundo Vista doing construction work and landscaping. As Aubrey Arant summed it up: *Not only was this work rewarding, but it was a time of good fellowship and worship.*

On Thursday, March 21, 1996, the Music Ministry hosted a special performance of the 45-member University Chorale of Oklahoma Baptist University. The concert was a rich, moving blend of popular and sacred hymns and was conducted by Nancy Cobb.

In the April 1, 1996 **Connections**, Pastor Bugg announced his resignation as Pastor, effective May 5:

I want you to know what I'm about to share is the most difficult decision I have ever made. I will be leaving as Senior Minister of Providence Baptist Church to become Professor of Preaching at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond.

What has made this decision difficult is the thought of leaving you. I could not imagine leaving this church to become pastor of another church. As far as I'm concerned, there is no better than this one.....In a word, you have been 'church' to my family and me. If there is one thing which I would like to leave with you, it is a positive sense of who you are and what you do mean to so many people.

Why then do I leave? I suppose there are several factors. One is my passion for preaching and my desire to be a small part of helping to equip the next generation of ministers for outstanding churches like Providence. Second, I sense at this point in my life the need for more reflection, thought, study and prayer. I sometimes get frustrated at the busyness of the pastorate. This is largely my problem. I want to be all things to all people and, of course, I can't. I'm not sure I've ever made peace with my limits, and a good pastor needs to do that.

My prayer for you and for me is the benediction that Fred Craddock inspired and that I have often used:

Live simply; love generously;

Speak truthfully; care deeply;

Pray daily; and leave the rest to God.

Chuck Bugg was Senior Minister of Providence for 2-1/2 years, just about the same time-frame needed by the church to choose a Pulpit Selection Committee, draft a minister profile, screen potential candidates and call Henry Crouch's successor. On the positive side, under Dr. Bugg, the church quickly recovered from the malaise and conflicts that remained from the Crouch ministry. Church membership and Sunday School enrollment increased under his tutelage. Church activities, budgets and commitment to missions continued to expand, both locally and world-wide.

On the negative side of his ministry, he may have accepted the call to Providence for the wrong reason. The Conservative takeover

of Baptist seminaries and political shift to the right may have threatened his position at Southern Seminary, and the call to Providence was a viable alternative. As he stated in the April 29, 1996 *Connections*: *When I came to Providence, I was wounded by the events at Southern Seminary and by the dramatic theological shift to the right. I felt as if I had lost 'my place.' Very quickly you restored that sense of place.*

Reliable sources within Baptist circles told Providence members that Dr. Bugg began circulating his resume about six months into his Providence ministry. The position he accepted at Richmond Baptist Seminary was the same basic position he held at Southern Seminary prior to accepting the call to Providence. At the seminary, he would have small classes, limited administrative duties and time for prayer, reflection, research and writing. Contrast this with being pastor of a large church like Providence, where you are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Gordon Weekley and Henry Crouch thrived on being the “pastor,” though each had different talents and administrative styles. Chuck Bugg was a “preacher” and the overall responsibilities of being the pastor overwhelmed him. In his resignation letter he told the truth about why he resigned and returned to teaching.

Lastly, some church members in conversations told me that they felt that Chuck Bugg had “saved” Providence. In reality, he provided stability and a sense of optimism that would prevail until a person more suited to the pastorate could be called.

Three groups were quickly organized to assist during the interim: (1) The Administrative Deacon Emphasis Group charged with putting together the interim administrative structure, chaired by Mark Powers; (2) The Worship Deacon Emphasis Group charged with deciding the type of pulpit supply for the interim, chaired by Debra Wallace; and (3) The Ad Hoc Nominating Committee in charge of selecting members for the Pastor Search Committee, chaired by Mickey Buford.

On Maundy Thursday, April 4, 1996, the Providence Music Ministry presented “The Living Last Supper,” a musical drama directed by Doug Haney. Following the service, an offering for World Hunger and Relief was taken.

On April 18, 1996, Bo Prosser began a Weekday Bible Study to meet on Thursdays at 10:30 am. The first study was from the book of James. Next, the April 20 Single Adult Retreat was held at Earl Pope's home on Lake Norman. The retreat leader was Rev. Tommy Hall, former Providence Minister with Youth and Associate Pastor. April 27 was the Medical/Dental Bus Church-wide Missions Day at Jackson Park Baptist Church, sponsored by the Health Care Fellowship with Coordinators Christa Moose and John Burd.

At the April 21, 1996, quarterly church conference, the Search Committee recommended and the congregation approved the call to David Woody as Minister with Students. David and his wife, Emilie, had visited Providence on April 20 and 21. He grew up in the First Baptist Church of Asheville and served on the staff of the First Baptist Church of Greenville, South Carolina. David would graduate in June from the Baptist Seminary in Richmond, where he was serving as president of the student body.

Two staff resignations took place in April 1996. Sarah Watson, after 13 years of faithful service as Receptionist/Administrative Secretary, retired effective April 30. As Business Manager Luther Bigby stated: *Sarah, the face that most people see first when visiting during the week and the voice that most telephone callers hear when they call the church, has reflected the character of the church in her friendliness, helpfulness and concern for visitors and members with whom she comes in contact.* Bo Prosser announced on April 29, 1996, that Business Manager Luther Bigby had resigned effective June 1: *While Luther has been with us only a short time, he has played a major role in initiating several key changes in our computer and telephone systems.*

A Farewell Reception for the Buggs was held on Sunday, May 5, 1996, from 3:00-5:00 pm. In the May 6 **Connections**, Dr. Bugg stated: *Diane, David and I want to thank you for the wonderful, final Sunday with you. Your care for us was evident and we appreciate every expression of love. As I have said to you, Providence Baptist has much to give, and our family has benefited immensely from our time with you.*

Anniversary Sunday was observed on May 19, 1996. The congregation was led in worship during the morning services by Dr. Bill Leonard, Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at

Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. Leonard also led an evening service entitled "If Jesus Tarries: American Religion in the New Millennium."

In the May 20, 1996 *Connections*, Jay Casey paid tribute to four Providence men in missions:

Providence continues a fine tradition of doing ministry through persons. Two of them, Chris Morris and Stephen Cook, will assume responsibility as summer youth interns, Chris at Fair Plains Baptist Church in North Wilkesboro and Stephen at Ardmore Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. Two 'older' men have recently reached milestones. Dennis Whitaker, former Counselor for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, will receive his Doctor of Ministry from Columbia Seminary. On June 1, Drag Kimrey will receive his Master of Divinity from the Baptist Seminary in Richmond.

May 1996 drew to a close with the Sunday School Worker Appreciation Banquet on May 31 and the Senior Retreat May 31-June 1 at Earl Pope's Lake Norman home. June 2 was Baccalaureate Sunday, which began with breakfast at Ron and Paula Withrows' home.

The June 3, 1996, *Connections* announced that on June 1, Drag Kimrey received the John and Charlotte Canning Award at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, given to the student who showed the most promise as a pastor and preacher. On Sunday, June 2, Drag was called to be Pastor of the Warsaw Baptist Church in Virginia, starting July 1. A Service of Ordination was held at Providence for Drag on Wednesday, June 19. At the same seminary commencement, David Woody, the new Minister with Students, received the Crouch Leadership Award, given to the student who had given excellent leadership to the seminary family during three years of involvement.

On Wednesday, June 5, 1996, the Young Musicians presented a special musical performance entitled "A Technicolor Promise." The concert was directed by Jan Smith, accompanied by Pat Long.

The June 10, 1996, *Connections* announced to the congregation, via the WMU and Men of Providence, a Tribute to the Memory of Kitty Crouch, which would consist of raising

\$21,000 to renovate a cabin for year-round use at Camp Mundo Vista, the North Carolina WMU Camp located near Asheboro.

The 1996 Youth Choir Tour was June 22-28. The tour theme was "Alleluia! Sing Praise!" and consisted of eight concerts from Charlotte to Meridian, Mississippi.

Bo Prosser announced two staff changes on June 17, 1996. Linda Burris resigned as Administrative Assistant to the pastor. Kathy Schofield joined the staff as the new Membership/Computer Secretary to manage all of the church membership data on the computer system.

On June 23, Minister of Activities Bobby Butler was invited "back to boot camp" by David Cromer, former Providence member and Chaplain at Parris Island, South Carolina: *David has invited me to speak at the Sunday chapel service. It is a great honor and an opportunity to share how God was with me in my experience in the Marine Corps. I share this with you as a prayer request that God will use me in a positive way when I go back to boot camp.*

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly met in Richmond, Virginia, on June 27, 1996. At 8:45 am on Friday, June 28, Providence led the CBF worship service. Dr. Chuck Bugg preached and Doug Haney, Pat Long and members of the Sanctuary Choir provided worship leadership.

The 1996 Summer Mission Trip to Chicago was July 12-23. Fifty-two youth and adults participated in ministering through Backyard Bible Clubs, physical labor, serving meals to the homeless and giving concerts in churches. The trip was coordinated by David Woody.

At a July 14, 1996, called church conference, the Ad Hoc Pastoral Search Nominating Committee submitted and the church approved the following candidates to compose the Pastor Search Committee:

Bill Andrews	Harold Eddins	Tom Philson
Christine Beaman	Dalinda Fairley	Wade Stokes
Nancy Bennight	Steve Goad	Beth Swann
Hunter Cook	Debra Motsinger	Mike Walker

In the July 14, 1996 **Connections**, Jay Casey announced that he would leave for London on July 28 for vacation and study at Oxford

University. During the two weeks, he would hear lectures, study, take guided tours and reflect.

Bobby Butler, Minister of Activities, in a column entitled "You Can't Find a Providence Anywhere!" announced his resignation as follows:

You have all received our letter telling you about our calling to Spring Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama. This was not a move we planned, but feel strongly about God's leadership in the decision. Spring Hill is about the same size and age of Providence.....They are in the process of completing the addition of a new activities center. It is because of what we have done here that led Spring Hill to consider me for the position. I want to thank you again for the privilege of serving in this fine church, because you can't find a Providence anywhere.

As Bo Prosser stated on July 14: *Bobby leaves us to go 'home' to Alabama. He will begin a ministry that will see him opening his FOURTH activities center. Very few Activities Ministers have his gifts. He will be missed. We will say 'goodbye' to him and Janice and their family on August 4.*

Providence hosted 12 missionaries in July and August 1996. Bob and Anita Moore, guest speakers on Wednesday, July 31, shared their experiences as a young missionary couple in Venezuela. From August 7-9, ten women from Chile shared their Christianity with Providence members through song and personal testimonies.

On July 29, 1996, the Deacon Emphasis Group announced that it had called Dr. Bill Leonard to serve as Interim Preaching Minister, beginning August 25. Dr. Leonard had preached at the May Anniversary services. At the time, he and his family were moving to Winston-Salem where he would be Dean of the new Wake Forest Divinity School. Co-Chairs Vicki Casey and Debra Wallace added: *We would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff for leading in worship through the summer – both Jay and Bo for their fine preaching, Doug for coordinating the services, and also the other members of the support staff. We are truly blessed to be in such hands through this interim period.*

On August 4, 11 and 18, 1996, Providence collected a special offering of \$5,000 to support the September 26-29 Billy Graham

Crusade at Ericsson Stadium in Charlotte. In addition, Doug Haney and many of the Sanctuary Choir members sang in the 5,000-voice Crusade Choir.

On Sunday evening, August 18, 1996, the Music Ministry presented "An Evening with Benjamin Harlan." Dr. Harlan was an arranger, composer and pianist serving as Dean of the School of Church Music at Southwestern Seminary since January 1995. Prior to this position, he served as Minister of Music in Louisiana churches and taught at the New Orleans Seminary. He was a widely published arranger and composer with choral, keyboard and handbell works included in the catalogues of several major publishers. Dr. Harlan was assisted by Doug Haney and Pat Long.

On August 22, 1996, the Women of Providence held a Spiritual Journey Retreat at Mary Ann Crouch's home, with the theme "Bring A Friend." The guest leader was Rev. Bill Andrews.

In the August 5 **Connections**, Bo Prosser stated that: *August 25 will begin Dr. Bill Leonard's tenure as Interim Preacher. He will inspire us with his wit and Biblical insights. He will bless us with his leadership.* In the August 19 **Connections**, he continued by stating: *He will inspire us with his pulpit leadership. His sermon this Sunday, August 25, will be 'Adam: The Power to Name.....and Choose.'*

The new church year began on Sunday, August 25, 1996. The Wednesday Adult Seminars were September 4-November 6: *Parenting Teens* (Bo Prosser), *The Psalms: An Invitation to Intimacy with God* (Jay Casey), *Positive Marriage: Relationships for Life* (Hunter and Janis Cook), *II Corinthians: Celebration and Confrontation* (Rick Edwards) and *Baptist History: Europe to Providence* (Jim Sasser).

September 1996 marked the eleventh anniversary of Providence's Weekday Education Program. Caron Clark, Minister of Weekday Education, stated: *Weekday Ministry is exciting! It is about sharing the love of Christ with a young family. It is about meeting the varied needs of the community. It is about church members getting involved in a program that meets the needs of our church family and surrounding community. It is about a ministry where goals are set and attained. It is about outreach and church*

growth. Exciting things are happening in the Weekday Ministry.....I thank you for this opportunity to serve you and our community.

September 8-13, 1996, was the Week of Emphasis for State Missions. As Bo Prosser stated in the September 3 **Connections**: *Like the Philippians, we're partners in the gospel.....During this Week of Prayer for North Carolina Missions, let us reflect on how each of us can become a partner in the Good News and make a difference in North Carolina. The Providence offering goal is \$3,000.*

On September 22, 1996, Providence hosted the Metropolitan Music Ministries Eleventh Annual Celebration of Music in Worship Service. The concert featured the combined music of five area church choirs and Queens College. A reception followed in the fellowship hall.

Providence was very active in the September 26-29, 1996, Billy Graham Crusade at Ericsson Stadium. Members served as ushers, choir members, organizers, fund-raisers and attendees.

In the September 16 **Connections**, Doug Haney announced the return of the Senior Adult Choir as follows: *'Humming Is For The Birds.....Learn to Warble' in the Senior Adult Choir beginning September 26.* The director was Pat Long, accompanied by Doug Haney.

In the September 23, 1996 **Connections**, Bo Prosser summarized September-December months at Providence as follows: *From now 'til the end of the year, we will be BUSY!! Stewardship Emphasis, Billy Graham Crusade, Operation Christmas Child, Charlotte Police Project, Christmas Offering for Lottie Moon and Global Missions, Special Christmas Music....WHEW!! Please leave a few days when you can share in the ministries of our church family. If we all carry a rock....we can move mountains.*

The 1997 Stewardship Emphasis was held October 27-November 10, 1996, with the theme "Give Until It Helps!" The 1997 budget goal was \$2,143,350, a 5% increase over the 1996 figure of \$2,031,730. The Stewardship Campaign was led by Bob Zweier.

The PrimeTimers held their Thanksgiving meeting on November 21, 1996, with guest speaker Dr. Harold Bales, the "Southern Fried Preacher." His topic was "Blessed Are The Thankful: A Beatitude

for a B Attitude.” Dr. Bales was the Director of Ministries for the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The annual Community Thanksgiving Service was November 26, 1996, at Trinity Presbyterian Church. Dr Jay Casey preached the sermon entitled “From Enough to Surplus.”

December 1-8, 1996, was the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions with the theme, “Missionaries From Churches With Love.” The Providence goal was \$40,000. The highlight of the week was the Missions Banquet on December 4 with guest speaker Dr. Zeb Moss, a retired missionary to Africa.

On December 7, 1996, Providence began a new local missions project called Room in the Inn held in the activities center. Each Saturday night through March 29, the church van picked up 12 homeless people from the Emergency Uptown Homeless Shelter and brought them to the church for the night. They were fed dinner and breakfast provided by individual Sunday School classes. Much of the credit for the origin and success of the project should go to Aubrey Arant and Penny Hewett.

Sunday, December 1, 1996, was the first Sunday of the Advent Season. On December 8, a Holiday Memorial Service was led by Jay Casey for members who had lost a loved one during the year. The Sanctuary Choir gave its Christmas concert, “An Appalachian Christmas,” on December 15, followed by a reception for the Casey family. The youth program of “The First Light” was performed on December 18. On December 22, the Youth Choir and Youth Bells provided the special music for the worship service. At 5:00 pm on December 24, the congregation participated in a Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. The Advent Season closed on December 29 with one worship service and special music by the College Choir.

On November 13, 1996, Associate Pastor Jay Casey submitted his letter of resignation, effective December 15. For over five years, Jay had effectively led Providence through two interims (Crouch and Bugg) and many changes. In the midst of all the changes, he had been a stabilizing influence for the congregation. In his letter of resignation, Jay stated: *My decision to leave Providence is driven by reasons that are both personal and professional. As I have experienced the intersection of these issues in my life, I have*

concluded that this resignation serves my best interest and the best interest of my family, who fully support my decision.

Jay Casey didn't just resign from Providence, he resigned from the ministry, a very bitter and frustrated person. He became Associate Pastor prior to Henry Crouch's departure and was forced to sign an agreement that he would not be considered as the new Senior Minister. This happened a second time when Chuck Bugg resigned. *The Charlotte Observer* reporter Ken Garfield, in an April 1998 interview with Jay, stated:

About all that remains of Casey's career in the pulpit is the bitterness that followed him out of church.

He quit the ministry after 18 years, hurt at not being able to land a job as senior pastor of a moderate Baptist church.....It wasn't that he no longer wanted the ministry, Casey said, he felt that the ministry didn't want him.

Today he operates a flower business, and gardening has given him a chance to appreciate in a new way the Easter story – you often must walk through darkness to see the light. In his case, he's learned that you have to do a lot of tilling before the daylilies can bloom.

There are sides to ministry that Casey misses: Being with people at the most pivotal moments in their lives, whether it's a baptism or funeral, teaching Bible study, or sharing fellowship with church friends.

Upon reflection, Jay Casey was a consummate Bible scholar. During his tenure at Providence, he planned, led and taught many Bible studies and seminars. In this capacity he was effective and one of the best Bible teachers under whom I have studied. Would or could he have stayed in the ministry as a professor at a seminary or university?

January 1997 opened with the announcement that Randy Ballard would join the staff on January 6 as Recreation Director, replacing Bobby Butler. Randy came to Providence from the Concord Parks and Recreation Department where he had served since 1984. He was recognized state-wide for his contributions to social and community recreation programs. Randy was a long-time member of Providence, where his expertise helped in planning the Activities Center and the formulation of the beginning ministries through activities. In

addition, he had been an active member of the Activities Committee, sharing valuable insights through the years.

As Bo Prosser stated in the January 13 *Connections*: *His experience, love of persons, and calling from God have led him to join us in the continued quality of ministry through recreation and activities. What a blessing to have Randy and his wife, Debbie, and his daughters, Courtney, Lauren and Brooke, sharing in this vital part of our church!*

News also arrived in early January that former Minister of Education and Business Administrator Wendell Sloan had been appointed as Business Manager of the International Baptist Seminary in Prague. In March, they would move to Germany where they would serve as hosts to volunteers from the United States and other parts of Germany to help refurbish some buildings for the German Baptist Union.

The Winter Bible Study was held 4:30-8:00 pm on Sunday, January 12, with guest teacher Dr. Wayne Stacy from Gardner-Webb University. His topic was "Ephesians, The Setting of the Epistle: A Proposal."

Jim Wylie, Chair of the Memorial Garden Committee, gave an update of the committee's work in the January 20 *Connections*. Church members were informed of the pre-construction prices for burial niches and memorial plaques:

Double Niche Space	\$1,750
Double Memorial Plaque	1,200
Single Memorial Plaque	600

On February 2, 1997, the Music Ministry sponsored a concert of sacred choral music performed by the Wingate University Chamber Choir and University Chorale. The Chamber Choir was conducted by Ron Bostic, and the Chorale conductor was Dr. John Blizzard, former Providence Interim Music Director.

On February 4, there was a WMU Missions Workday with the theme, "Share His Love." The focus of the workday was making cancer dolls and prayer bears for sick children.

During February and March 1997, a series of Visioning Workshops were held with the theme, "Where Do We Want To Go and How Can We Get There?" These "information gathering" meetings were designed to provide the church with data concerning

the needs and dreams of the different church ministries. The collected data was considered vital to the development of a Priority Ministry Plan for the church. The process was coordinated by the Pastor Search Committee, church staff and the planning firm of Atkinson, Dyer and Watson.

In early February 1997, Jim Martin was called as Business Administrator. Jim and his wife, Dianne, came to Providence from the First Baptist Church of Sarasota, Florida, where he had served since 1971. Jim was an ordained minister, who had served God in many capacities – music, youth, education and administration. He held an MBA and was certified in Church Business Administration and by the Southern Baptist Church Business Administration, where he served as president from 1995-1996.

In the February 24, 1997 *Connections*, Jim Martin stated:

We are pleased to be a part of the Providence family. Your Personnel Committee and staff have facilitated our relocation with thoughtfulness, thoroughness, and tenderness. The church's reputation for missions preceded our mutual initial contact. Upon arrival, that reputation has been confirmed.....We join you with a great sense of expectancy of what God is doing and will be doing in our midst.....thank you for inviting us to be a part of this family of believers.

The Week of Prayer for Home Missions was March 3-7, 1997. The study, entitled "New Beginnings," was led by Bo Prosser and Sally Higgins and focused upon how missionaries start churches and how Providence could learn how to start a church in 1997. The Providence Home Missions Offering goal was \$9,000.

The guest preaching minister on March 23, April 6 and 20, 1997, was Dr. Cecil Sherman, Visiting Professor of Pastoral Ministry at the Richmond Baptist Seminary. Dr. Sherman retired in 1996 as the Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Prior to that time, he had served Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth and 20 years of leadership at the First Baptist Church of Asheville. He was also co-founder of *SBC Today* and had served in many capacities with the Southern Baptist Convention.

On March 24, 1997, Jim Martin announced that Corinne Higdon had joined the staff as Membership/Computer Secretary. Corinne

had prior experience with Schaeffer Systems in maintaining an extensive database. She and her husband, Bobby, had been members of Providence for about three years.

The popular Wednesday Evening Seminars returned in April 1997: *A Look at Favorite Bible Passages* (Bill Andrews, Frank Marks and Wayne Stacy), *Christian Leadership* (Bo Prosser), *Support Group for Young Married Couples* (Janis and Hunter Cook), *Baptist Teachers* (Gary Odom, Harmon Simpson, Becky Stout, and Mike and Bunnie Walker).

On Sunday evening, April 20, 1997, the Music Ministry presented the Festival Singers directed by Bob Pritchard. They presented a concert of sacred choral music featuring spirituals and hymn arrangements.

Minister of Education Bo Prosser became “Dr. Bo” at the end of March 1997. In addition, there was a welcoming reception for Jim Martin and Randy Ballard on April 27.

The visiting guest minister on Sunday, April 27, 1997, was Dr. Alan Neely, former professor at Southeastern and Princeton Seminaries. At the time, Dr. Neely was living in retirement in Raleigh. He had spoken at Providence many times during the years and was a favorite of the congregation.

At 7:00 pm on Sunday, May 3, 1997, “Elijah” was presented by the combined choirs of the First Baptist Church of Gastonia, St. John’s Baptist, Providence Baptist, and the Charlotte Repertory Orchestra. Dr. Robert Burton, retired distinguished Professor of Conducting and Ensemble Activities at Southwestern Seminary, led the combined choirs. Guest soloists for the concert were baritone John Blizzard as Elijah, soprano Anne Brittain, mezzo-soprano Anna Perry Gosnell, tenor Dale Bryant, and youth soloist Beth Sorber of St. John’s Youth Choir.

In the May 5 *Connections*, Bo Prosser proclaimed: *God is so good! What a wonderful way He continues to bless us! The attendance and the spirit of worship this past Sunday were invigorating. ‘Elijah’ was awe-inspiring! Thanks, Doug and the Sanctuary Choir.*

May 18, 1997, was Providence’s 43rd Anniversary. Charter members and former ministers were recognized. Special guests for the 11:00 am service were Carillon, a Handbell Choir from the

University of Southern Mississippi. These outstanding collegiate ringers performed at Providence as a part of their spring tour through the Carolinas and Georgia. The day concluded with dinner-on-the-grounds at the pavilion.

May 1997 concluded with the Sunday School Worker Appreciation Banquet on May 30. Nancy Golson, Sunday School Superintendent, paid tribute to the workers. Doug Haney provided the entertainment, and Tim Holcomb, Director of the Bible Teaching Ministry of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, challenged everyone to "Reach Higher."

The annual Baccalaureate Service was at 11:00 am on June 1. For the special music, Meredith Adams and Kendall Hunter sang "With Wings As Eagles." The youth speakers were Jeff Austin and Caryn Crye.

Donald Earl Keeney was ordained at 3:00 pm on Sunday, June 8, 1997. His wife, Rachel, sang "Reflection of Christ." The Ordination Sermon was preached by Dr. Bill Leonard, Dean of the Wake Forest School of Divinity and Providence's Interim Preaching Minister. Rev. Keeney would soon move to Kansas City, Kansas, to begin his new job as Librarian and Associate Professor of Learning Resources at Central Baptist Seminary.

The Vacation Bible School began on June 11, 1997, with the theme, "Down on the Farm: Growing With God." Angela Clark and David Woody coordinated the school.

In the June 16, 1997 *Connections*, Jim Martin announced that a new sound system had been installed in the sanctuary and needed just a little more tweaking to complete the process. He also recognized three staff anniversaries. Bo Prosser completed three years as Minister of Education; Angela Clark celebrated three years as Minister with Children, and Doug Haney completed two years as Minister of Music.

During the June 29, 1997, morning worship services, a visiting choir from Walbridge Youth Church in St. Louis, Missouri, under the direction of Rev. Bobbie Shields, provided the special music. This group of youth, ages 10-18, performed frequently in the St. Louis area.

On June 29, 1997 at 6:00 pm, Providence held a church-wide Talent Night. It was a fun-filled mixture of real and pretend talent. The evening concluded with an ice cream fellowship at the pavilion.

The last half of June and early July 1997 were spent preparing for the July 19-27 St. Louis Youth Mission and Choir Trip. A barbecue and auction sale were the primary fund-raisers for the trip, while there was a church-wide collection project for the items that the youth would use for Vacation Bible Schools and other projects. On Saturday morning, July 19, Minister with Students David Woody and 55 other youth and adults departed the church for St. Louis.

On July 7, 1997, Sally Higgins, WMU Director, announced that July had been designated as a month for a Special Offering for the Baptist Retirement Homes, Baptist Hospital, or the Baptist Children's Homes. All three institutions were dependent upon this yearly offering.

The July 20, 1997, church bulletin listed Lin Carter as Ministry Associate Intern. However, there was no information listed about his call or duties. Today Lin and his wife, Tonya, are the ministerial team at the Weddington Church sponsored by Providence.

July 27, 1997, was Dr. Bill Leonard's last Sunday as Interim Preaching Minister. In appreciation for Dr. Leonard's faithful service, the church established a designated fund to be used at the Wake Forest Divinity School. In the August 4 *Connections*, Dr. Leonard responded as follows:

Dear Friends:

You are part of a wonderful congregation with a superbly free pulpit. Your openness, compassion and spirit remain great gifts to me. Rest assured that I will stay in touch and look forward to other ways in which we can work together.

I close with a copy of the benediction which I have used each Sunday. Thanks for everything!

Go in peace and as you are going know this:

By the grace of God you were brought into this world;

By the mercy of God you have been sustained

To this very moment; and by the love of God,

Fully revealed in Jesus the Christ,

You are being redeemed, now and forevermore. Amen

In the July 28, 1997 *Connections*, the Deacon Worship Emphasis Group announced that Dr. Cecil Sherman had been called to serve as the Interim Preaching Minister for the months of August, September, October and November. At the time, Dr. Sherman was serving as First Baptist Church of Asheville's Visiting Professor of Pastoral Ministry at the Richmond Seminary. He retired in 1996 as the Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, following pastorates at First Baptist in Asheville and Broadway Baptist in Fort Worth. He and his wife, Dot, were widely known and respected members of the Baptist family.

Doug Haney, Minister of Music, also announced in the July 28 *Connections* that Providence — during August, September and October — would explore the issues of congregational health, following Christ and making choices through the theme, "Beyond Survival." For August, the theme was "Beyond Survival: A Congregation in the Making" In September, it would be "Beyond Survival: Disciples in the Making." In October, it would be "Beyond Survival: Integrity in the Making."

Jim Wylie, Chair of the Memorial Garden Committee, announced in the August 4 *Connections* that the committee had been unable to raise the \$100,000 to begin construction on the project. Thus, it would be placed on hold until 1998.

During the August 10, 1997 vesper hour, the youth reported on their mission trip to St. Louis, shared their personal experiences, gave a concert and entertained the congregation with a slide show of their work in the St. Louis area. They received a round of standing applause.

From August 13-27, 1997, six Providence members participated in a Berlin Mission Trip to work on the German Baptist Seminary: Buddy and Nancy Bennight, Ken England, Bill Griffin, and Anne and Frank Litaker. In addition, the August church-wide mission action project was collecting school supplies for the Jackson Park students.

On Sunday, August 24, the Music Ministry presented a choral concert of hymns, spirituals and gospel songs entitled "Then Sings My Soul," featuring the Sanctuary Choir. The performance was directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Pat Long. A church-wide dessert fellowship followed the concert.

Angela Clark, Minister with Children, announced in the August 18 **Connections** that Melinda Clark had joined the children's ministry team as a Children's Ministry Associate. She would serve as lead team member for childcare events and serve as a support member in other children's ministry events.

On August 18, 1997, Jim Martin announced two ministerial staff anniversaries. On June 15, David Woody celebrated his first anniversary as Minister with Students. Caron Clark, Minister of Weekday Education, celebrated her third year on August 1.

Sunday, September 7, 1997, was Happy New Year and New Year's Day in Sunday School (beginning of the new church year). At 7:30 pm, the day concluded with an Evening with Paul and Nicole Johnson, a wonderfully talented drama team. As Bo Prosser stated: *You will be laughing and crying at the same time! You will be motivated and moved.*

The "Providence Has a Heart for Missions" continued with the September 15-20, 1997, Camp Mundo Vista Renovation Project headed by Aubrey Arant. Fifteen members worked, had fun, and worshipped as they did carpentry, painting, cooking and landscaping at the camp.

The Wednesday Night Adult Seminars were September 10-October 29, 1997: *A Detailed Study of the Book of Revelation* (Jim Sasser), *Developing a Spiritual Lifestyle* (Lin Carter), *Sunday School Teachers Sunday School Class*, *Getting Your Children Ready to Worship* (Angela Clark), and *Spiritual Re-engineering* (Bo Prosser).

The Week of Prayer for North Carolina Missions was September 14-21, 1997. Prayer sessions and study groups were held during the week to inform church members about the needs and use of funds raised during the campaign. The Providence offering goal was \$4,000 with the state-wide goal being \$2.1 million.

A new support group began on Thursday, September 11. The MOMS support group had been organized by Moms for Moms. This was followed on September 18 by the PrimeTimers Club. The guest performer was Loonis McGlohon, the well-known composer and pianist.

In the September 8, 1997 **Connections**, Bo Prosser, Minister of Education, announced the beginning of two new Sunday School

classes. The first was a Bible Survey Class, led by Anita Pangle, Albert Leath and Earl Pope, to survey every book in the Bible during the next year. The second was a Nearly/Newly Wed Class for newly engaged or newly married couples in the church.

On September 15, 1997, Jim Martin announced that all church parking areas would be paved September 22-October 1. He also announced three staff anniversaries: Bunny Knebusch, five years; Kathy Hunsucker, five years; and Pat Long, two years.

The Personnel Committee, on September 22, announced that Scottie Stamper had been hired as Single Adult Coordinator. This was a part-time position leading in the ministry to the single adults in the church and community. Scottie was a graduate of Appalachian State University and Southern Seminary. She had served in a variety of ministry positions as staff liaison to Associational missions, recreation and single adults. Scottie had also served for two summers on the Centrifuge Staff.

The guest preacher on Sunday, October 5, 1997, was Dr. John Lepper. Dr. Lepper was Director of the Family Ministry Department for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

On Friday, October 17, 1997, 31 Providence high school singers and adults departed for a weekend choir tour. The High School Choir led in worship at Skipwith Baptist Church in Richmond on October 19 in the morning and Ardmore Baptist Church in Winston-Salem that evening. Stephen Cook, former Providence member, was Minister of Youth at Ardmore.

The 1998 Stewardship Campaign began on October 19, 1997, with the theme, "Discover The Joy!" The budget was 6% greater than 1997 with 2.7% of that increase attributed to repayment of the loan for paving the church parking lots. The remaining 3.3% was spread through the various missions, ministries and programs. Sunday, November 16, was Commitment Sunday for pledging the \$2,272,634 budget for 1998.

The guest preacher on Sunday, October 19, 1997, was Dr. Frank Tupper, a Professor in the Department of Religion at Wake Forest University. Dr. Tupper had spoken at Providence many times during the years and was a favorite of the congregation.

The annual Fall Festival was held on Saturday, November 1, 1997. It was two hours of games, fun, fellowship and excitement.

During the weekend of November 1-2, 1997, Doug Haney, Pat Long and the Sanctuary Choir were on retreat at Lake Junaluska. During their absence on Sunday, November 2, the Gardner-Webb University Concert Choir, under the direction of Chris Roberts, provided the special music for the worship services. Ginger Wyrick was the guest organist.

During November and December 1997, Providence was very active in both local and worldwide missions: Operation Christmas Child, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Project, the World Missions Christmas Offering, and Room in the Inn. The Providence World Missions Offering goal was \$40,000. The special guest speaker was Sam Bandela, a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionary in Atlanta.

The Advent or "Prepare the Way of the Lord" Season began on Sunday, November 30, 1997. At the December 7 vesper hour, the children's Christmas program, "What Gift Shall I Bring," initiated the Christmas music season. Next came the Middle School Choir and Bells Christmas Concert, "All Is Well," on December 14. At 6:00 pm on Sunday, December 21, the Sanctuary Choir, High School Choir and Orchestra presented a concert entitled "Carols and Classics." The Christmas music programs concluded with the December 24 Organ Recital by Pat Long and the annual Candlelight Communion Service.

There were two staff anniversaries in December 1997. Darlene Martin celebrated six years of service and Kenneth Barnett 12 years.

The year 1997 closed with an office staff change. As Jim Martin stated in the December 29 *Connections*:

We say goodbye to Corinne Higdon who has served as Membership/Computer Secretary since March. We welcome Carleen Acevedo to fill this position. Carleen moved to Charlotte from California where she had experience in a church office. We are delighted to have Carleen join our team adding her skills and talents.

January 1998 began slowly with an Ordination Service for new deacons, completing several church renovation projects, and concerns about the search for a new Senior Minister. In the January 12, 1998 *Connections*, Randy Ballard announced a new health program that would begin on Sunday, January 25, entitled "First

Place: A Christ-Centered Health Program.” It focused upon each participant’s mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health. A mandatory Orientation Session was required of all participants.

The January 12, 1998 *Connections* announced congratulations to two Providence members. Debra Wallace had won the Ben Craig Outstanding Elementary School Teacher Award for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, and Ron Withrow had been elected Chairman of the Meredith College Board of Trustees.

The January 19, 1998 *Connections* carried two announcements of significance. First, Tom Philson and the Pastor Search Committee reported that the committee had been very active screening and making contact with several potential Senior Minister candidates; however, a time-frame of mid-to-late spring was anticipated. Second, Jim Martin reported that 1997 was a record year in giving. Designated mission gifts totaled \$143,599, while church budget receipts were \$2,035,772.

On January 26, 1998, Bo Prosser stated that:

‘Building Community’ is our theme for 1998. The Providence community is a significant force in the lives of people who choose to join. As we look forward to a great year, everything we do in 1998 should be measured by the criterion ‘does this build community’ for the Kingdom of God at Providence. Notice that ‘building’ is an active verb – we need to be energetic with our inreach and outreach in order to enhance the Providence community.

On Tuesday, February 3, 1998, there was an all-day church-wide Missions Workshop. The theme was “Help Us Help Others, No Skills Required.”

On February 13-14, 1998, Providence hosted “A Weekend Marriage Enrichment Experience, Living Happily Ever After, Making Good Marriages Better.” Seminar participants could choose from ten classes, such as money and finances to Venus and Mars. Bo Prosser was one of the key organizers of the seminar. The special keynote speaker was Dr. Diana Garland, former Director of the School of Social Work at Southern Seminary and currently on the Baylor University School of Social Work Staff.

In the February 9, 1998 *Connections*, Bo Prosser announced a seven-week Wednesday Night Lenten Series entitled “Puzzling

Promises on the Way to the Cross,” beginning February 25. Dr. Mary Foskett of the Wake Forest University School of Divinity was the guest speaker.

March 1998 began with the Home Missions Focus which culminated in the Easter offering which would be divided into “thirds” — for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, North American Mission Board, and Youth Summer Mission Trip to Oklahoma. The Providence goal was \$9,000. The March 14 Spring Cleaning Day at the church included the annual barbecue cooked by Jeff Summers. The profit would be used to support the Youth Summer Mission Trip to Oklahoma.

The PrimeTimers met on Thursday, March 19, 1998. The special guest was Marcus Hamilton, freelance illustrator of Dennis the Menace Cartoons.

In the March 23, 1998 *Connections*, Scottie Stamper, Single Adult Coordinator, announced a new Single Adult Sunday School Class. The class focus was upon singles, ages 20-26.

The March 30, 1998, *Connections* carried a “challenge” to the congregation. The deacons, WMU and Baptist Men issued the challenge to complete the Camp Mundo Vista Project where \$15,000 was needed to upgrade a cabin at the year-round missions camp and have it dedicated to the honor of Kitty Crouch. The goal was to have the funds raised by Homecoming Sunday, May 17. Emma Duke, Executive Director of the North Carolina WMU, would be in attendance to accept Providence’s contribution to the project. In addition, members of Kitty Crouch’s family would also be guests in the congregation.

Bill Griffin, a member of the Providence Health Care Fellowship, announced on March 23, 1998, that 11 Providence members would leave on August 28 for a ten-day medical mission trip to Los Angeles, Chile. The team solicited both funds and medical items for the trip, coordinated by Wylie Berry.

April 1998 began with two music specials. On April 5, a church-wide concert featured Kyle Matthews, concert artist, songwriter, and musical storyteller who presented challenging images of the Gospel. For almost ten years he had combined his love for songwriting and teaching into “musical sermons” and “story songs” which served to educate as they entertained and facilitated a fresh experience of

focused worship. As Doug Haney stated: *You will not want to miss this concert!*" This was followed on April 8 by a Holy Week Cantata, "Come To The Cross," presented by the High School Choir, directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by a chamber orchestra.

The April 9 Maundy Thursday evening service included observance of the Lord's Supper and a message by Dr. Wayne Stacy, Dean of the Gardner-Webb Divinity School. An offering for World Hunger and Relief was received following the service.

In the April 6, 1998 *Connections*, David Woody, Minister with Students, announced that Lin Carter would be working with the Middle School Ministry as an intern. Lin had been working for several months in a variety of church responsibilities.

At the April 19, 1998, quarterly church conference, the congregation approved the following requests: Recommended Chris Morris for admission to the Baptist Seminary at Richmond, approved Rod Coward as a Deacon Emeritus, and approved the Pastor Search Committee's request to have one worship service at 11:00 am on May 3 to hear the proposed pastor candidate followed by a special business meeting to vote to call the candidate as pastor.

On May 2, 1998, many Providence members shared in a Memorial Service at Pritchard Memorial Baptist Church to honor Hal Shoemaker who had blessed many Baptist churches with his musical talents as Minister of Music. During the service, there was a mass choir, under the direction of Neal Eller, composed of music ministers, friends and choir members from Pritchard Memorial, Providence Baptist, First Baptist of Hickory, First Baptist of Marion and First Baptist of Winston-Salem. Hal had served as Interim Music Minister at Providence from May 1994-May 1995.

Providence called Dr. Roy Alton Cadenhead, Jr. as its fourth Senior Minister on May 3, 1998. Dr. Cadenhead, a native of Georgia, was a graduate of Furman University and Southern Seminary, where he earned a Masters and Doctorate. He had served several churches in Georgia, including ten years as Pastor at the Hill Baptist Church in Augusta. Just prior to accepting the call to Providence, he was the Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of High Point.

Al and his wife Suzanne, also a graduate of Furman University, had two children. Chris, age 27, was Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Mt. Gilead, North Carolina. Melody, age 21, was a student at Furman University.

In the May 4 **Connections**, Dr. Cadenhead stated:

I truly believe that the next few years are going to be the most challenging in the history of the church. This post modern era is forcing us to look at the way we do the work of the ministry. Our 'product,' the message of the Gospel, has not changed. However, the way we deliver that product must be examined and creatively managed.

Churches that are willing to be open and responsive to a changing culture are going to be given unbelievable opportunities for growth and excitement. Determining the very best way to deliver the Gospel of Christ will require the very best of our efforts.

I cannot think of a time when I would rather be doing the work of the local church. I cannot think of a time when I would rather be serving as pastor to a congregation. Some philosophers have described the turn of the century and its influence upon the church as a major crisis. We must remember that the other side of crisis is always opportunity!

Dr. Cadenhead, during his tenure at the First Baptist Church of High Point, wrote a weekly column in the **High Point Enterprise** entitled "Looking on the Inside." He continued this ministry outreach at Providence by writing a monthly column in **The Charlotte Observer's** "Saturday Faith and Values Section." For example, the November 27, 1999, column was entitled, "If you're Not Paying Attention, You'll Miss The Moment."

Providence's 44th Anniversary was held on Sunday, May 17, 1998. During the 8:30 and 11:00 am worship services, the Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by chamber orchestra and organ, presented John Rutter's "Requiem." In the May 11 **Connections**, Minister of Music Doug Haney stated:

Requiem, scored for chorus, soprano soloist, and chamber orchestra, draws on texts of remembrance and hope that are particularly appropriate for the celebration of Anniversary Sunday, when we praise God for the faith and vision of the

early members of Providence Baptist, some of whom are now with the Lord. Requiem moves us to consider our own mortality and to hope in God who said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.'

On May 18, 1998, Maxine Dunn celebrated 25 years of service to Providence as Financial Secretary. Bo Prosser, in the **Connections**, stated: *This milestone is a compliment to both Maxine and Providence.....She has been dedicated to the task and the church. Providence can be justly proud that someone of Maxine's caliber has freely chosen to affiliate with us for this significant period of time. Maxine will be given special recognition on Sunday, June 7.*

May 1998 closed with the Baccalaureate Service during the 11:00 am worship service and the Mission Education Recognition Service at 6:00 pm. Bo Prosser and Donna Hastings led the two May 31 services.

On Sunday, May 24, 1998, Dr. Cecil Sherman delivered his last sermon as Interim Preaching Minister with the title "Doing the Main Things." Dr. Sherman had faithfully served the Providence congregation for nearly ten months and is remembered fondly for the way he always closed his sermons: *That's what I came to say, and I have said it.* The church took up a love offering for Dr. Sherman and gave it in his honor to the Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond.

In addition, a special word of thanks went to Bo Prosser who served for nearly two years as Staff Coordinator in addition to his regular duties as Minister of Education. In fact, all of the staff members deserved credit for a job well-done during the two-year interim.

In the June 8, 1998 **Connections**, Deacon Chair Clarence Adams welcomed the Cadenheads as follows:

The Deacon Body is excited to have you as our next Senior family. We firmly believe that God, through the working of the Holy Spirit, has brought us together. Thanks be to God!

It is our firm belief that a strong partnering relationship, based on a bond of trust and understanding, is essential between the Senior Minister and the Deacon Body

to ensure continuing growth of the church toward spiritual maturity. The deacons of Providence are committed to partnering with you to this end.

Dr. Cadenhead began his ministry on Monday, June 8, 1998. His first sharing with the congregation as Senior Minister took place on Wednesday evening, June 10, with the topic "Saying Hello and Saying Goodbye." During the next two Wednesdays, he led in a series of conversations entitled "Almost Anything Goes," an open forum for members to ask him anything about him and his ministry.

His first Sunday in the pulpit as Senior Minister was June 14, 1998. The sermon, "Focal Points for Providence," outlined some of his priorities of ministry in the first few weeks, which would set the direction of his leadership and direct the tone of the Providence fellowship ministry.

Doug Haney announced that the High School Choir, Ensemble and Handbells would depart on June 10 for a five-day tour of concerts centered in the Washington, D. C. area. In addition to singing six concerts or services in five days, the High School Choir would sight-see in Baltimore and Washington. The tour would conclude on June 21 with a home concert at Providence.

In the June 15, 1998 **Connectons**, Pastor Cadenhead was asked: *What do you consider to be the most important issue facing Providence today?* His response was:

Determining the best way to share ministry for the 21st Century is number one. So much is changing, and the rate of change is becoming unbelievably fast. Only a few years ago a long-range plan for a church would cover ten years. Change is occurring so fast now that most long-range plans extend only for three years or less. The message of the Gospel has not changed at all. The way that 'product' is delivered is undergoing enormous change. To be effective, we must be open, creative, and expectant.

Former Providence youth, Lee Gray, graduated from the Richmond Baptist Seminary on May 30 and accepted the position as Minister of Youth and Singles at St. John's Baptist Church. Lee was the son of Buck and Libby Gray.

Sunday, June 28, 1998, was Special Staff Recognition Day. As Lisa Kelly, Personnel Committee Chair, stated in **Connections**:

During the past two years, our church has been fortunate to have such excellent leadership. Please make every effort to express your love and appreciation to them for their devotion to us.

The June 22 **Connections** carried a note from Dr. Cecil Sherman:*I will miss you. You were gracious and open to me. But more was involved – a growing friendship or mutual appreciation – we were at the work of ‘doing church.’ Our time together was not wasted time or simply waiting time. We did the work of the church together.....Thank you for letting me be a pastor again, if only from the pulpit. It was a joy to me. It was also a joy for the Providence congregation to have Dr. Sherman for ten months.*

The June 22, 1998, **Connections** announced that Eddie and Cindy Ring Ruble would be appointed as missionaries to Southeast Asia at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly on June 16. Both Eddy and Cindy were members of Providence before going to the Richmond Baptist Seminary, where they received Master of Divinity Degrees. They were scheduled to leave for Southeast Asia in January 1999.

In the June 29, 1998 **Connections**, Scottie Stamper, Single Adult Coordinator, announced a Summer Retreat Weekend at Lake Norman. The retreat would be a combination of Christian fellowship and summer fun.

There were three June and July staff anniversaries: Lu Fowler, six years; David Woody, two years; and Debra Wallace, eight years.

In the July 13, 1998 **Connections**, Bo Prosser stated: *The Personnel Committee has ‘loaned’ me to Richmond Seminary for the next three weeks. Chuck Bugg and I will be teaching doctoral students ‘The Practical Application of Theology’ regarding Proclamation and Education! WOW! This will be a lot of fun.* Bo, in the July 27 **Connections**, stated: *THANK YOU – Richmond Seminary is wonderful! Thank you for the opportunity. I had a wonderful time sharing with the doctoral students. The staff and faculty are so appreciative to Providence. You make a difference in the lives of theological education. Thank you for allowing me to have a direct involvement.*

On Saturday, July 18, 43 youth and 10 adults flew from Charlotte to Anadarko, Oklahoma, for a week of Vacation Bible

School and physical labor. They would be working with the Wichita Community Baptist Church, a small church in Anadarko. David Woody, Minister with Students, asked the congregation for prayers and notes of encouragement for each of the 53 persons on the mission team.

In the August 3, 1998 *Connections*, David Woody summarized the trip:

During our week, we led Vacation Bible School for 135 children – some Indian, some Black, some Anglo. We painted the church building, the community building, the outdoor baptistry, the front gate and the campground bathroom, etc. While we worked, we built relationships with Jr., Jemma, Cherokee, Kendrick, and Laughter. We built relationships with each other. We all traveled further on our spiritual journeys.

On Sunday evening, August 23, 1998, the Music Ministry presented a summer concert entitled “An Evening of Broadway Favorites.” Doug Haney directed the concert, accompanied by Pat Long. The concert was followed by a church-wide dessert fellowship.

The new Sunday School year began on Sunday, August 30, 1998. In early September, photographs were taken for the 1998 Church Pictorial Directory.

Jim Martin announced, with sadness and regret, the resignation of Bunny Knebusch as staff Administrative Assistant, effective September 15. Bunny had served Providence since September 1992.

September 1998 was North Carolina State Missions Offering month. The offering would help more than three million unchurched persons in North Carolina. The Providence offering goal was \$5,000.

In the August 31, 1998 *Connections*, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

In the weeks ahead we will be joining together in the '90 Days of Prayer.' The excitement for me in this activity is that for the next three months we will be praying for the same needs. Something powerful has to happen when that many people are praying for the same thing. '90 Days of Prayer' is not the peak event in our corporate prayer life. It

is just another small step in making prayer the resource for effective ministry in our church.

The September 1998 local missions focus was the Jackson Park after-school mentor/tutor program. Church members were encouraged to support the ministry by donating school supplies, being tutors and serving as substitutes.

The Metropolitan Music Ministry held its thirteenth annual "Celebration of Sacred Music" at Providence on Sunday, September 27. The concert featured a choir of Charlotte-area choral directors, choirs from Avondale Presbyterian, Myers Park Baptist, Providence Baptist and St. Stephen United Methodist, plus the Festival Singers from the Charlotte Choral Society, a liturgical dance ensemble and a brass ensemble. A reception followed the concert.

The 1999 Stewardship Emphasis Campaign began on October 11, 1998. The theme, "Joy of Belonging," focused upon stewardship as a matter of attitude more than assets. The 1999 budget presented to the church for approval was \$2.35 million. November 8, 1998, was Commitment Sunday for pledging the budget.

The dedication of the Kitty Crouch Cabin at Camp Mundo Vista was October 21, 1998, with Pastor Cadenhead leading the service. Providence members donated \$20,000 and did much of the work to refurbish a cabin in memory of Kitty.

During the weekend of October 23-24, 1998, Providence hosted the Regional Sunday School Training and Church Growth Conference with the theme, "Sunday School Training and Church Growth." Bo Prosser was the coordinator of the conference. Dr. Bill Leonard, Dean of the Wake Forest University Divinity School, was keynote speaker. At the end of the conference, a World Missions Offering was taken to support the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship mission efforts.

At the October 18, 1998, quarterly business conference, the church approved three staff changes that were designed to strengthen the ministry team: (1) Bo Prosser's job title was changed from Minister of Education to Associate Pastor-Adult Educator; (2) Scottie Stamper's job status was changed from part-time to full-time as Minister to Singles; and (3) The position of Parish Nurse was added. As Pastor Cadenhead stated: *I realize that for many of you this is a brand new concept. However, this position*

will add a whole new dimension to our ministry. Marti Todd was hired to be the first Parish Nurse.

October 1998 closed with the annual Fall Festival. It was a fun-filled evening of fellowship and games. Randy Ballard coordinated the planning and execution of the festival.

November 1998 began with the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer in the Gordon Weekley Chapel. All of the church women were invited for a special time of prayer, fellowship and worship.

The WMU sponsored an Adult Foreign Missions Study on November 11. The guest speaker was Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Missionary Tammy Stacks who shared her experiences and ministry to Romany Peoples in Hungary.

During November and December 1998, Providence was actively involved in local mission projects. A few of them were: Loaves and Fishes, Jackson Park, Operation Christmas Child, and Wrap Up A Habitat House for Christmas.

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was November 30-December 4, 1998, which included morning prayer services, prayer luncheons and concluded with a Missions Banquet. The guest speaker for the week was Rev. Daniel Vestal, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Coordinator from Atlanta. The Providence World Missions Christmas Offering goal was \$52,000.

Rev. Gordon Weekley died on November 16, 1998. His ministry touched many lives around the Charlotte community during his pastorate and 20 years as President of Rebound. The members of Providence and his many friends gathered in the sanctuary on Saturday, November 28, to celebrate his life and worship God.

The 1998 Advent theme was "Come, Let Us Go To The Mountain," from Isaiah 2:3, where the visionary prophet invited the people of God of all nations to the place where God is. In the November 23, 1998 *Connections*, Minister of Music Doug Haney stated: *Beginning on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29, we begin our own mountain climbing expedition. Our companions each Sunday morning are fellow travelers with familiar names: John the Baptist, Joseph, Mary, shepherds, and Jesus. They will be our guides to the 'mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob.'*

The December 7, 1998, *Connections* carried two congratulations to Providence members. First, Clarence Adams was elected to the General Board of the North Carolina Baptist Convention and, second, Roberta Teachey to the *Biblical Recorder* Board.

The Music Ministry's Christmas music programs began on December 13 with the Sanctuary Choir's presentation of "A Colonial Christmas." The concert presented an imaginative account of Christmas in Mecklenburg County in December 1775, featuring the choir dressed in colonial costumes. Choral and instrumental music included authentic 18th Century American Christmas music of William Billings and Moravian composer Johann Herbst, selections by Corelli and Handel, and settings of Appalachian as well as traditional carols. Doug Haney directed the performance, accompanied by Pat Long.

On Wednesday, December 16, the 70-voice combined High School and Middle School Choirs, High School Ensemble and the High School and Middle School Bells presented "There Is Great Joy Coming." Doug Haney, Pat Long, Debra Wallace, and many others deserved credit for the magnificent concert presented by the youth.

The last music concert of the year was the December 17 PrimeTimers' Christmas With Friends program. It was entitled "A Festive Holiday Celebration" with Al, Doug, Pat and the Senior Adult Choir.

The December 14, 1998, *Connections* announced the death of Christine Doyle. Chris, during the first 20 years of Providence's history, was an active choir member and fondly remembered for her inspiring and moving solos during worship services and concerts.

The final Advent Christmas worship gathering of 1998 was the annual Candlelight Communion Service on December 24. The solemn and joyous service ended with an offering taken for World Hunger and Relief.

In the December 21 *Connections*, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

In the midst of a season of giving I am overwhelmed when I consider how God has blessed me. I am thankful, first of all, for saving my sinful soul through the sacrifice of Christ. On top of that list also is my gratitude to God for surrounding me with a family who connect with me through the blood in my veins and for a new family at Providence who are connected

*with me through the blood of Christ. I am a blessed man.
Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your life.*

The first 1999 church activity was the Winter Bible Study January 6-February 10. Pastor Cadenhead taught the book of Joshua.

On Sunday, January 10, 1999, there was a Deacon Ordination Service followed by the WMU's special missions program, "Adopt-A-People, Reaching the Unreached." The guest speakers were Philip and Shantel Vestal, coordinators of the program. The object of the program was to explore ways that Providence might become involved in helping to evangelize people in unreached regions of the world through prayer, giving of resources and sending a team to minister to one of the unreached people groups of the world.

On Sunday, January 17, the Music Ministry sponsored a concert by the UNC-CH Men's and Women's Glee Clubs. Their repertoire was a mixture of sacred and secular music of high quality in all styles and from all periods in history, for both male and female voices separately and combined. They also sang some spirituals and a variety of folk songs. The Glee Clubs were conducted by Stephen Mulder and Daniel Huff. Providence member Kevin Morris was a member of the Men's Glee Club.

Providence members, during the January 17 morning worship services, enjoyed a "pulpit exchange." Pastor Cadenhead preached at the First Baptist Church of Mt. Gilead while his son, Chris, preached at Providence. Chris, Pastor at Mt. Gilead, was a graduate of Duke University Divinity School. Some Providence members wanted to make the exchange permanent. Al, upon hearing the jibe, stated: *OK, but I will not exchange salaries.*

February 1999 was a busy month at Providence. It began with the February 2 WMU Mission Action Workshop, a hands-on project to make items for others. Next was the February 5-6 Love American Style High School Choir Dinner Theater project to raise funds for the '99 Summer Mission Tour to Eleuthera. This was followed by the February 10-March 31 Divorce Recovery Workshop led by Bo Prosser and Scottie Stamper. On February 16, a workshop entitled "A New Way To Be Baptist" was led by Dr. Gary Parker, Coopera-tive Baptist Fellowship Coordinator for

Baptist Principles. Lastly, Pastor Cadenhead started a “Ministers Anonymous” support group for the many ministers of the congregation to meet, support and encourage each other.

As part of the 1999 theme of “Celebrating the Past and Anticipating the Future,” Providence welcomed Rev. Henry Crouch back to the pulpit on Sunday, February 14. He chose for his sermon topic “Adventures in Faith” from Acts 2:42, 3:1-10.

A new Sunday School class began on February 14 with the name, “Through the Bible in a Year, Part I.” The teachers were Harry Harden, Bo Prosser and Richard Landers.

The major focus at Providence from February 17-April 4, 1999, was a Lenten Journey: “Claiming the Simple Gifts of Our Faith.” As Pastor Cadenhead stated in the February 15 *Connections*:

The meaning of any celebration is in direct proportion to the preparation made for that event. We should prepare for the celebration of Easter. We encourage you to come with us on our Lenten Journey as we claim some simple gifts, the simple gifts of our faith.

Our hope is that by claiming these simple gifts, some simplification might be added to our lives. Most modern day believers would gladly welcome a simplification of our lifestyles. This goal, among others they might claim, is worthy of our time and attention.

The speakers for the six services were Dr. Al Cadenhead, Dr. Wayne Stacy, Dr. Jim Somerville, Dr. Randall Lolley, Dr. Bill Leonard and Dr. Jim Pitts. The six-week journey was spiritually uplifting and adequately prepared the way to Easter.

The Week of Prayer for Missions in North America was March 1-5, 1999. Each day featured morning and evening prayer services. The Providence Easter Offering goal was \$11,000, which would be evenly divided among the Annie Armstrong Offering, Youth Mission Trip, and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

On Sunday, March 14, 1999, as a part of the “Celebrating the Past and Anticipating the Future” series, Providence welcomed back Dr. Chuck Bugg (1993-96). Dr. Bugg chose as his topic, “What Is It We Believe That Makes A Difference” from John 11:17-27.

March 1999 concluded with two major events. First was the

annual barbecue of beef and pork cooked by Jeff Summers. Barbecue proceeds would be used to support the Youth Summer Mission Trip. Second was the Music Ministry's hosting of the Charlotte Premier of "Early One Morning" featuring Noelle Player, daughter of Frances and Woody Player. "Early One Morning" rested on the underlying theme of God's mercy and salvation using the experiences of Mary Magdalene (Noelle Player). The work was based on scripture passages which mentioned Mary Magdalene and also honored the long-standing tradition assigning her the life of a prostitute redeemed by Christ's love and associating her with the woman with much to be forgiven (Luke 7:37).

April 1999 began with the Maundy Thursday Service which concluded with the congregation participating in a silent observance of the Lord's Supper. On Easter Sunday, April 4, the morning services featured choral music with brass quartet.

Following the April 11 worship service, the WMU invited the congregation to participate in a covenant to adopt two unreached people groups through the Adopt-A-People Program of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Philip and Shantel Vestal, coordinators of the program, led the special service to adopt the Minangkabau and Kurd people groups through prayer and financial support.

The April 15, 1999, PrimeTimers meeting featured a "little" slight of hand. The guest speaker was Magician Bill Bright.

A new part-time staff position was advertised in the April 19, 1999, *Connections*. It was a Parish Nurse position to be filled by a registered nurse with at least two years of clinical experience to work 20 hours a week at the church. The nurse would be responsible for overall assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of whole person healthcare for individuals of the faith community. The project was a joint venture between Providence and the Presbyterian Hospital Healthcare Human Resources Department. Marti Todd, a Providence member, would be the first Parish Nurse.

The April 21, 1999, mid-week service guest speaker was Dr. Tony Cartledge. Dr. Cartledge was Editor of the *Biblical Recorder* and discussed some of the changes and plans for future editions.

The big topic in April and May 1999 was the preparation and discussion of a Long-Range Plan. Pastor Cadenhead, in the April 26 *Connections*, stated:

To prepare we must do several things, including the need to create a different kind of space for education. Even as we are right now, we would have a nightmare of a problem if we had to vacate our building and move our very senior group out in a hurry. We could not do it. We must place groups in areas where there is more accessibility. Our program as well must address the needs of a talented and resourceful aging congregation.

There are other age groups that need our attention as well. Churches somewhere will address those needs. I want Providence to be one of them. We will talk more about these kinds of changes. Join us as we journey. It is exciting!

On Wednesday, May 5, 1999, the Middle School Choir and Bells presented their home concert prior to departing on their May 7-9 tour to Busch Gardens, Williamsburg; Freemason Baptist, Norfolk, Virginia; and First Baptist of Greensboro. This was followed on May 12 by the Children's Choir Ministry presentation of "Make Your Life a Song to God." The concert featured the Cherub Choir, Melody Makers, Music Makers, Trinity Singers and Young Musicians.

Thursday, May 6, was the National Day of Prayer with the theme, "Light the Nations with Prayer." Each congregation member was asked to select a 15-minute period to pray during the day.

Sunday, May 16, 1999, was Anniversary Sunday. The guest preacher for both morning services was Dr. Cecil Sherman, former Interim Pastor and Professor at the Richmond Seminary. At noon there was dinner-on-the-grounds. From 6:00-8:00 pm, Dr. Sherman presented a study of Baptist Heritage. As Bo Prosser stated in the May 10 *Connections*: *He will give us background and insights into who we are as free and faithful Baptists. He will help us put in perspective the past, present and future of Baptist life.*

On Saturday, May 22, 1999, there was a Single Adult Conference with Dr. Harold I. Smith. As Scottie Stamper, the conference planner, stated: *Join us as the Singles Ministry tries to learn how to destress and find JOY in their lives.*

On Sunday, May 23, Dr. Smith conducted a Grief Recovery Worship Service. He was a specialist in grief recovery and trained in leading recovery groups as well as conducting memorial services.

In the May 24, 1999 *Connections*, Bo Prosser announced that Ministry Student Intern Lin Carter had been called to be the Minister of Education and Children at the First Baptist Church of Wilmington:

The Carters have become family around here in the past two years. Lin has been a wonderful addition to our ministry staff. Tonya has been equally wonderful as helpmate, Sunday School worker, and worship leader in music. We send them out as 'missionaries' from our church. Thank you for all you have done through ministry and music.

Pastor Cadenhead announced that during the 1999 summer months, he would preach a series of sermons that dealt with the relationship between faith and everyday life called "Faith For Everyday Living." He also announced that Wednesday evening program time would be divided into two important parts. The first half would be focused on prayer. The second half would be given to a specific missions activity of the church.

In the June 7, 1999 *Connections*, Deacon Chair Hunter Cook wrote a column entitled "In Celebration of Dr. Al Cadenhead's First Anniversary as Senior Pastor:

As we celebrate Dr. Cadenhead's first anniversary at Providence, we should thank God for this energetic servant He sent here to guide us. Leading a church as active, diverse and talented as we are requires a rare combination of intelligence, passion and strength. We also expect spiritual integrity and personal caring from our pastor. In Al, we have gotten the complete package.

It has been a joy to see what has happened through Al's dynamic leadership. There is a renewed sense of focus and spirituality on the power of prayer; a deeper appreciation for the experience of worship; a focusing of our vision for the future; and above all a growing spirit of community among us.

The 1999 Vacation Bible School theme was "Under Construction: A Habitat for Humanity VBS." The hands-on-learning experience touched over 330 lives during the week.

On June 19, the High School Choir and Bells departed for the island of Eleuthera in the Bahamas. The choir of 39 singers and eight adults presented eight concerts in churches, schools and outdoor pavilions. They also worked on a Bible training center under construction in a village called James Cistern. The tour was a unique opportunity for them to share God's love through music.

The July 6, 1999, **Connections** announced that:

Our Missions Flagpole is now in place and is being used. As our Youth Choir was in Eleuthera, the flag of the Bahamas was flying to remind us that a group from our church was away 'on mission.' We will do that each time persons from our church are away so that we will remember them and pray for them while they are serving. The purpose of the flag is to heighten our awareness of mission groups who are serving. Watch the flag pole and you will know someone is 'at work' for the Lord.

David Woody, Minister with Students, led the 1999 Youth Mission Trip to Cleveland, Tennessee, July 18-25. Forty-five youth and nine adults worked with Ocoee Outreach scraping, painting, roofing, and leading Vacation Bible School. Ocoee Outreach was a part of the Bradley County Baptist Association, which identified families in need in the Cleveland area and then partnered youth groups to work with those families during the summer.

At the July 21, 1999, quarterly church conference, the church approved the following recommendation:

Recommendation from Providence Memorial Project Committee that this project be authorized to proceed only after \$50,000 has been raised from donations and/or income from pre-sale of niches and memorial plaques. The remainder of the cost, up to a maximum of \$50,000, would be funded through a church loan. Payment of the loan to be paid by future income from the Memorial Garden.

Pastor Cadenhead in the July **Connections** stated: *The Memorial Garden will be a symbol of permanence on our campus. Much like the old cemeteries that surrounded the churches of times past, it will*

also allow our church to be a focal point for families from birth to death. My thanks to Jim Wylie and the appointed committee for sticking with the task.

On July 25, 1999, the Music Ministry presented a concert by Blake Cline. Blake, a resident of Charlotte, performed a montage of vocal selections from Broadway to Bach.

George Crouch left on July 25 with a group to work in Macedonia. While he was gone, the Missions Flagpole flew the flag of Macedonia to remind members to pray for his safety and for meaningful experiences.

Sunday, August 1, 1999, was a Day of Prayer for World Peace. Each worshipper was given, upon entering the sanctuary, a Special Prayer Guide for the day.

In the August 16, 1999 **Connections**, Bo Prosser announced his return as follows:

Good to be home! Thank you for three great weeks of teaching at BTSR. Our students were wonderful and your prayers were greatly needed. We had eleven doctoral students who really challenged us. Chuck Bugg and I gave three extra sessions because the group was so involved in the learning process. Thank you for your commitment to the Seminary and to theological education. Thank you also for affirming my participation.

On August 23, Doug Haney announced that a piano fund had been established in memory of Sanctuary Choir member and deacon, John Bethea. A Boston piano, designed by Steinway and made by Kawai, was selected and placed in the fellowship hall.

On August 29, the Music Ministry presented "An Evening with Joseph Martin," featuring the Sanctuary Choir. Mr. Martin, a nationally known pianist-composer-arranger, directed the Sanctuary Choir and Adult Ensemble in singing six of his anthems, including "Canticle of Hope," a piece dedicated to the people of Oklahoma City. In addition, he performed a number of solo piano arrangements from his recordings.

In the September 7 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

Hope you will notice our new visitor's center in the Rotunda. Along with the new furniture that has been created will be persons stationed each Sunday to give direct

attention to our guests and first-time worshippers. A special thanks to Mike Walker for building such a beautiful focal point.

The Education Ministry and WMU, on September 11, sponsored "Celebrating Women: Exploring the Sacred, Nourishing the Ordinary." The all-day seminar was filled with inspiring speakers, music and worship. The guest speaker was Katie Grogan, a medical doctor from Baltimore.

September 12-18, 1999, was Special Prayer Emphasis leading up to the North Carolina Missions Offering. The 1999 theme was "We Are the Hands of God." The Providence offering goal was \$5,000.

Providence hosted the Metropolitan Music Ministries fourteenth annual Celebration of Music in Worship on September 26. The service featured choirs from Cokesbury United Methodist, Christ Lutheran, Providence Baptist, Westminster Presbyterian, Chamber Chorus of the Oratorio Singers, Livingstone College Concert Choir, Choir of Area Choral Directors and Brass Ensemble and Timpani.

The September 27 *Connections* announced that the North Carolina State Flag had been raised on Providence's Missions Flagpole in honor of church teams going to the eastern part of the state to assist in disaster relief caused by Hurricane Floyd. Church members were asked to participate through volunteering their time, funds, and collecting food and supplies.

The 90 Days of Stewardship: Tithes, Talents, Time.....began on October 1. Each member of the congregation was asked to take one of the Prayer and Devotional Booklets in preparation for the upcoming 2000 budget pledging. The 2000 budget proposed by the Finance Committee was \$2,500,000. The Stewardship theme was "In the Light of Grace."

Providence hosted a Regional Sunday School Training and Church Growth Conference October 22-23, 1999. As Bo Prosser stated: *Here it comes.....the biggest Sunday School training extravaganza ever offered to Providence members. We need you to be a part of it. Dr. Mary Foskett from Wake Forest University will lead us in worship. You will be filled up and ready to grow beyond your wildest imaginings.....Join us!*

October 1999 ended with the annual family Fall Festival in the Activities Center. November began with the Baptist Women's Day of Prayer. The 1999 theme was "Celebrate the Promises of Christ."

November 14, 1999, was a busy day. First, it was Commitment Day for the 2000 budget. Second was a workshop for single adults of all ages entitled "Single and Surviving the Holidays," coordinated by Scottie Stamper with assistance from Bo Prosser.

On November 23, 1999, the annual Thanksgiving Service was revised to "Wednesday on Tuesday" for the convenience of so many who travel during the break. It has proven to be very popular and supported by the members.

In the November 22 *Connections*, Doug Haney stated:

On Sunday, November 28, we begin the season of Advent with the theme, "Secrets and Surprises." The beginning of the church year calls us to focus on two themes: the coming of Christ for the first time – his birth – and the coming of Christ for the final time – his second coming. Advent gives us time to anticipate, to wait, to long for God. What secret may God reveal to you? What surprise may await your discovery? Join us in worship this Sunday as we 'unwrap' the first present of the Christmas season together. 'Let every heart prepare him room.'

The Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions was December 5-9, 1999 with the theme, "The Unfinished Task—Reaching the World." The special guest speakers were Caroline Jones, retired missionary to Chile; Lauri and Kelton Hinton, former missionaries to Benin; and Dr. Bo Prosser. The Providence World Missions Christmas Offering goal was \$50,000.

The Music Ministry presented three concerts during December 1999. The children's concert entitled "Secrets" featured the Cherub Choir, Melody Makers, Trinity Singers, Young Musicians, Providence Chimes and Sanctuary Chimes. The "Peace, Peace" Concert was presented by the Middle School Choir, High School Choir, Middle School Bells and High School Bells. The "Masterpieces of the Nativity" concert was presented by the Sanctuary Choir, accompanied by an orchestra. The soloists were: Anna Perry Gosnell (mezzo-soprano) and LuAnn Ritsema

(soprano). Doug Haney, Pat Long and Debra Wallace received many accolades for their direction and support of the music groups.

December 1999 drew to a close with the Christmas Eve Service composed of carols, the Lord's Supper and the annual Passing of the Light. December 26 was the final Sunday service of the year. While Pastor Cadenhead shared the season with his family, the sermon was delivered by Rev. Drag Kimrey, Pastor of the Warsaw Baptist Church, Warsaw, Virginia. Drag and Carolyn were former active members of Providence.

During Pastor Cadenhead's absence in 1999, the Providence pulpit was filled by the following persons:

Dr. Charles Bugg, Professor of Preaching, Richmond Seminary and Former Senior Minister

Rev. Chris Cadenhead, Pastor, First Baptist, Mt. Gilead

Mr. Stephen Cook, Student at Richmond Seminary

Dr. Henry Crouch, Pastor Emeritus of Providence

Dr. Mary Foskett, Wake Forest University Divinity School

Ms. Caroline Jones, Retired Missionary to Chile

Rev. Drag Kimrey, Pastor, Warsaw Baptist, Warsaw, VA

Rev. Frank Morrow, Guest Missionary

Dr. Bo Prosser, Associate Pastor and Adult Educator

Dr. Cecil Sherman, Professor of Pastoral Ministry, Richmond Seminary

Dr. Harold Ivan Smith, Specialist in Grief Ministry

Rev. David Woody, Minister with Students



Chapter 6

The 21st Century

2000-2004

On December 31, 1999, America and the world were concerned about the potential of terrorist attacks to be launched on New Year's Eve. In addition, the arrival of "Y2K" (Year 2000) threatened to crash computer systems around the world. In America alone, an estimated \$100 billion was spent to prevent the collapse on January 1, 2000, of banks and automated teller machines, the Internet, financial markets, air traffic control, and the national defense system. However, the Y2K catastrophe did not happen, and the few problems that did arise were more humorous than dangerous.

In the 2000s, America and the world were online, forever changing the way people communicate (e-mail, cell phones), do business (e-commerce), and experience life. By 2000, there were nearly 200 million Internet users worldwide, including 80 million Americans. Along with it came a nuisance called "junk e-mail or spam"—an unwanted commercial e-mail—and developing a national registry to curb telemarketing calls.

Politics, both from a national and state perspective, continued to lose favor with the public. Two examples stand out. The November 2000 presidential election between Al Gore and George W. Bush, along with the controversy that followed it, nearly brought the government to a standstill. In North Carolina, the 2003 trial and conviction of Meg Scott Phipps for campaign irregularities and misuse of the Office of Secretary of Agriculture shocked many people. In addition, the retirement and death of several key, long-term political personalities (Jesse Helms, Strom Thurmond, Fritz

Hollings and Jim Hunt) changed the face of politics.

The years 2000-2004 also saw the loss of many familiar personalities such as David Brinkley, Dale Earnhardt, Bob Keeshan (Captain Kangaroo), Charlie “Choo Choo” Justice, Brooks Lindsay (Joey the Clown), Katharine Hepburn and Perry Como.

Most Americans will never forget where they were or how they continue to feel about the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The same is true of the 2002 threats of war and disarmament demands targeted at Iraq’s Saddam Hussein that eventually led to war on March 19, 2003. The war was declared over on May 1, but attacks against American troops continue with no end in sight. Saddam was finally captured on December 13, 2003.

The year 2003’s most exciting and looked forward to event was the First Flight Centennial Celebration at the National Wright Brothers Memorial near Kitty Hawk. On December 17, 2003, the main event was an attempt to fly a Wright Flyer reproduction at the exact moment—10:35 am—of that momentous flight. Regrettably, the effort was not successful.

In 2000, Charlotte’s population was 575,000 with Mecklenburg County’s exceeding 700,000. The banking industry continued to grow steadily with First Union purchasing Wachovia and taking its name. Bank of America kept pace by purchasing Fleet Bank of Boston. The Center City continued to grow with the April 30, 2003, opening of the Westin Hotel, Charlotte’s first convention hotel with 700 rooms near the Convention Center. In addition, construction of a new downtown coliseum is underway and will become the home of the Charlotte Bobcats, beginning with the 2004-2005 NBA season.

The arena/coliseum issue was hotly debated between 2001-2003. In fact, it led to the defeat of Lynn Wheeler, one of the city’s most popular and experienced politicians. At the same time, Republican Mayor Pat McCrory won a fifth term, indicating that he would push for regional land planning and a policy on business incentives. On September 30, 2003, Black leader Jim Richardson died. Jim had earned the title of “elder statesman” in Charlotte and the respect of politicians statewide with decades of public service and no-nonsense advice. Lastly, Ruth Easterling, Mecklenburg’s senior member to the General Assembly, retired.

Sports rose to the forefront in Charlotte from 2000-2004. The Charlotte Hornets departed for New Orleans in 2002, but within a few months were replaced by Bob Johnson's new Bobcats franchise. Professional golf returned in 2003 with the highly successful Wachovia Championship played in April at the Quail Hollow Country Club. The Carolina Panthers in 2003 won the National Football Conference Championship by defeating the Philadelphia Eagles and lost to the New England Patriots (32-29) in the Super Bowl in Houston on February 1, 2004. However, the most successful and enduring sports success came through the Independence High School Patriots, under coach Tom Knotts, who won four straight 4-A Football State Championships, a feat never accomplished before in North Carolina.

Religion was also in the news. In October 2002, Billy Graham announced that the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association would move from Minneapolis to Charlotte. On October 29, Billy and Governor Mike Easley turned the ceremonial spades of dirt at the 63-acre site beside the Billy Graham Parkway. As he stated: *I believe this place is going to be a center for proclaiming the Gospel throughout the world.* In addition, former PTL leader Jim Bakker returned to his television ministry in April 2003, 16 years after the last show from his religious/entertainment resort in Fort Mill. The show is Bakker's latest project since leaving prison in 1994. It is a new show, but the same old theme.

In the November 15, 2003, *New York Times* article about Charlotte, Louis Jacobson stated:

Over the last 20 years, Charlotte, North Carolina's largest city has remade itself from a textiles town into an investment and banking center, the nation's second largest financial services hub after New York City.....The moderate Carolina weather makes the city a pleasant place to stroll in winter, while museums and hip shops are also a draw. And though the city has a thriving historic-preservation movement, you get the unmistakable feeling that Charlotte sees itself as a city of the future—and it has the new skyscrapers to prove it.

In March 2004, shoppers can look forward to the opening of a Nordstrom's Department Store at the SouthPark Shopping Center. In late spring of 2005, a Saks Fifth Avenue will open at the Quail

Corners Center. Charlotte's future continues to project growth and progress.

During Wednesday evening services in January 2000, Pastor Cadenhead taught a study of I Thessalonians. In addition, two elective Bible Study classes were offered. Rev. Frank Marks did an expository and devotional study of the book of James. Steve Goad taught the devotional classics of Christian literature. Both classes offered 14 weeks of insights and fellowship.

Parish Nurse Marti Todd joined the Providence staff on January 17. She would serve part-time as health educator, health counselor and health advocate. Marti brought much nursing and ministry experience to Providence. In addition, she had served as a deacon and been an active participant in the Health Care Fellowship.

"Doctor Bo" Prosser was Oxford University bound in late January where he studied for a week in one of the oldest and most prestigious libraries in the world. His studies included Church and Culture, Leadership and an extended look at some "humor studies." In 2003, he would author a book on humor.

On Sunday, January 23, 2000, the Music Ministry sponsored the Charlotte Children's Choir to lead in worship at both morning services. The choir consisted of 170 children, ages 8-18, in four separate ensembles and was directed by Sandy Holland, the Managing/Artistic Director, since 1991. They rehearsed at Providence on Monday and Tuesday evenings.

The January church-wide Mission Action Collection Project was items needed for the February 2000 trip to Honduras. Church members responded with old prescription eyeglasses, magnifying glasses, children's multivitamins, and crayons.

February began with the annual Baptist Women's Mission Action Workshop. Several groups worked on a variety of service projects. Penny Hewett was the workshop coordinator.

Next came the February 11-12 Marriage Enrichment Experience Weekend sponsored by Providence, the Center for Christian Education, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Wake Forest University Divinity School. This exciting experience featured keynote speakers Otis and Diegie Andrews from Macon, Georgia. Bo Prosser was the workshop coordinator.

On February 13, 2000, the Activities Ministry and the Matthews Playhouse presented the musical "Godspell." The performance included an intermission dessert fellowship.

The week of February 13-20 was Focus on WMU with the theme, "Transformed: From WMU With Love." As WMU Director Christa Moose stated in the February 14 **Connections**:

During this special week, WMU would like to thank all those involved in missions through Missions Education, Women on Mission, and the WMU Leadership Team. Thank you for giving of your time, talents, and energy while promoting missions at Providence, in our community, nation and world. There are 150 persons directly involved in WMU, and we are grateful for your leadership!

On February 25 and 26, the High School Choir sponsored a Dinner Theater entitled "As Good As It Gets." The musical revue featured songs and scenes from the "big screen" in addition to many other delightful acts. All proceeds would go to support the High School Choir Summer Tours.

During late 1999 and early 2000, Providence developed a Long-Range Plan for 2000 and Beyond with the theme, "Reaching Up, Reaching In, and Reaching Out." The first task was crafting a viable Mission Statement:

Connecting People and God
in Christ through Worship,
Fellowship and Missions.

The Long-Range Plan began with "The Sacred Functions of Providence Baptist Church," based upon Matthew 22:37-39: Jesus replied:

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.

The Long-Range Plan in simplified form is as follows:

I. WORSHIP: REACHING UP

Primary Goal: To make God-centered worship a meaningful and exciting primary focus for congregational life at Providence.

II. FELLOWSHIP: REACHING IN

Primary Goal: To provide the best support and nurture within the congregation of Providence as we share our lives together.

III. MISSIONS: REACHING OUT

Primary Goal: To respond with greater commitment and effectiveness to God's call in local and worldwide missions and create meaningful opportunities for service.

STRENGTHENED BY:

IV. MINISTRY

Primary Goal: To use our spiritual gifts and talents in meeting the needs of others in the name of Jesus.

V. EDUCATION

Primary Goal: To equip the congregation for ministry, missions and fellowship through quality Bible teaching and quality people.

VI. SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Primary Goal: To provide the best staff, facilities and support services for an effective church program.

The congregation approved the above plan in February 2000. A special thanks is extended to the hundreds of staff, deacons, committee members and individual church members who spent months researching, studying and preparing the plan for congregational approval. Chair Curt Farmer and the Long-Range Plan Implementation Team would be responsible for implementing the plan.

March 2000 began with the Week of Prayer for Missions in North America with the theme, "How Shall They Hear.....By All Means!" The Providence offering goal was \$14,000. The guest speakers for the week were Anne Sims, Wycliffe Translator in Indonesia for 20 years, and "our" Emily Still, Student Ministry with InterVarsity at UNC-Wilmington.

From March 8-April 12, 2000, Providence went on a Lenten Journey during Wednesday evening services with the Lenten theme, "Responding to God's Call." Guest speakers were Pastor Cadenhead, Jeff Smith, Father Samuel Weber, Dr. Jim Somerville, Dr. Bill Leathers, and Dr. Bill Leonard.

Jim Wylie, Chair of the Memory Garden and Columbarium Committee, announced in the March 13, 2000, *Connections* that a contract with Columbarium Planters, Inc. was signed on March 9. This event became a reality when the church requirement of \$50,000 had been raised. An additional \$50,000, plus an allowance for landscaping, was needed to complete the project.

March 2000 drew to a close with the two-day "Understanding Today's Youth Culture" Seminar. The guest speaker was Walt Mueller, President and Founder of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding, and an author and nationally recognized authority on youth culture and family issues.

On March 27, the Music Ministry presented a concert by the Samford University A Cappella Choir entitled "The Life of Jesus in Choral Music." The 57-voice choir sang music spanning a wide variety of styles, ranging from a Renaissance motet by the Spanish composer Tomas Luis da Vittoria to an excerpt from Dave Brubeck's jazz oratorio, "Light in the Wilderness." The choir was directed by Milburn Price, Dean of the Samford School of Music.

April 2000 began a vision for a church-wide day of missions throughout Charlotte, named "Operation In As Much (OIAM)." It would take place on May 20 and be a different way of celebrating Providence's birthday. As Co-Chairs Barbara Berry and Harold Eddins stated in the April 10, 2000, *Connections*:

We will be concentrating the energy and resources of our entire congregation in a large number of mission projects throughout the city of Charlotte. These projects will range from repairing homes of needy persons to visiting nursing homes to conducting wellness clinics in malls to assisting local agencies with their current needs. Help is still needed in the development of the mission projects. Our hope is to have options for every age group, from the youngest in our church to the oldest.....This endeavor is a huge labor of love,

but it can be a very effective way of reaching out to our city in the name of Christ.

Holy Week services included Maundy Thursday on April 20 with Silent Communion. This was followed on April 23 by the Easter Sunday Celebration and Worship. The Providence Easter Offering for Missions in North America was \$14,000.

In a church bulletin insert on April 23, Pastor Cadenhead announced:

Thank you for your patience in recent weeks as we have been trying to make a few enhancements in the Sanctuary. When we started, we were primarily just trying to provide new carpet. We also had adequate gifts made to cover the cost. Then we realized this was a good time to make some changes in the platform area which we had been talking about for a long time. We also found ourselves in the position of having to make choices about materials. In some cases we could cut corners and spend less. However, this Sanctuary is so important and we make changes so seldom. This is the Lord's room and it is worth the cost.

After reviewing dozens of samples for the platform floor, we chose the current material. The floor is made of natural walnut. What you see is the natural color. It was the only floor we found that blended with the dark wood around it. The pulpit was handcrafted by a local company and it was finished to match the floor in tone. It is a close replica of the original except it is floor level and the structure is not confining. The communion table was refinished to match the new pulpit.

Thank you once again for your patience. May whatever we do in this Sanctuary be for one reason, to glorify God.

In the April 24, 2000 **Connections**, Bo Prosser announced: *On Thursday, May 4, Providence will participate in the annual National Day of Prayer. All over the nation people will be praying for our country in 'Pray Y2K: America's Hope for the New Millennium.'*

May 2000 was filled with celebrations and worship as follows:

May 10 Children's Choirs and Chimes Concert

May 14 "A New Creation" presented by the Sanctuary

Choir and Charlotte Symphony Orchestra

- May 17 Middle School Choir and Bells Concert
- May 20 "Operation In As Much" Mission Project
- May 21 Anniversary Sunday
- May 21 Missions Education Recognition
- May 24 Missions Friends Recognition
- May 28 Baccalaureate Service

In the May 22, 2000 **Connections**, Bo Prosser stated:

Thanks to Al Cadenhead, Randy Ballard and a cast of thousands.... 'Operation In As Much' was a vision of our Pastor. What a great vision this was! We did church and were church as we shared together with our community. I'm thankful for a pastor willing to be creative and take risks!

Anniversary was another great day. Randy Ballard and his committee worked extra-long hours to make sure that the rest of us were prepared for and cared for! What a blessing to have colleagues to share with! Thank you all who made these two events so spectacular!

In the May 30, 2000 **Connections**, Business Administrator Jim Martin announced that a church E-Mail Web Site was operational. The address is www.providencebc.org with individual staff members having individual addresses.

The High School Choir Summer Tour began June 7, 2000, and culminated with the home concert on June 14. During the tour, the choir performed several concerts in Baptist churches in South Carolina and Georgia. In addition, they toured historic sites and took in an Atlanta Braves Baseball Game.

The annual Vacation Bible School was June 12-16 with the theme, "B. S. 1440.....Build a Holy Place." Nearly 400 children and adults had a week filled with crafts, Bible study and fellowship.

In the June 19 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead gave a summary of his completed mission trip to Romania:

I, along with Dr. John and Dee Gaskin, joined 80 other people from all over the country to form four medical teams. Each day the teams went in different directions, primarily to poor peasant villages outside Timasora, Romania. On each team there were doctors, dentists, nurses, assistants and a preacher. There were 40 translators who

were divided among the four teams each day.

Each team saw about 150 patients each day. The maladies presented ranged from colds to cancer and tuberculosis. We had an opportunity to witness to every patient who came to us. That was where I came into the picture. I had three top-notch translators with me each day who joined me in talking to every person about their faith. We made it perfectly clear that they did not have to answer any questions in order to see the doctor. We just emphasized to them that we were as interested in their spiritual health as their physical well-being. We had experiences with patients which will forever be a source of joy and excitement.

The annual Youth Summer Mission Trip was June 24-30, 2000. Fifty-three teenagers and adults traveled to Greenville, North Carolina, to work in Pactolus where they taught Bible School in a low-income neighborhood and worked on construction projects in the afternoons. Hurricane Floyd had devastated the eastern part of the state. The youth lived at East Carolina University and commuted to Pactolus each day.

In the June 26 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead “officially” announced that Providence was laying the groundwork for a new mission church:

Most of you are aware that in recent months we have begun the preliminary efforts to start a new church in the very southern end of Charlotte, specifically the Weddington area. The field there is ripe for a strong, moderate church. A small core group has been meeting for several weeks in a Bible study setting and it will be from the anticipated growth of that group that the new church will emerge.....This is going to be a very exciting venture, one that will pay dividends for decades to come.

In the July 3, 2000 **Connections**, Jim Martin announced that Martha Haigler had joined the church staff as Membership/Computer Secretary. Martha was a member of the church and the daughter of Margaret Hilton, a former Sunday School teacher.

During the week of July 1, 2000, Dr. Bo Prosser and his family attended the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Orlando, Florida. At

the Thursday banquet, he was honored with the “Excellence in Christian Education” Award. As he stated in the July 10, *Connections*: *Wow! How special that was and how special to have my family with me. As my friend, Bob Fulbright, was presenting the award, he pointed back towards Gail and the girls and acknowledged my family. He then pointed there again and said, ‘Look again.’ There stood Randy, Brian, Scottie and Angela who had come down to be with me for this. Mercy, I was bowled over (and no my socks were NOT knocked off!!).*

At the July 19 quarterly church conference, the congregation voted unanimously to support the building of a Habitat for Humanity House during Blitz Week in Charlotte from September 9-17, 2000. The first task was to raise the \$45,000 to construct the house and then provide labor for the construction. Aubrey Arant was the project coordinator.

During the July 22 Sunday morning worship services, the special music was provided by the Chancel Youth Choir of the First Baptist Church of Gaithersburg, Maryland. The choir consisted of 50 youth in grades 7-12, who were on a summer concert tour.

The July 24, 2000, *Connections* announced that from July 16-23, Minister of Music Doug Haney had conducted the North Carolina Baptist All Star Youth Choir, which rehearsed at Campbell University and then presented concerts in eastern North Carolina Baptist churches. Audrey Brown, a member of Providence’s High School Choir, auditioned and was selected to sing with 63 other youth from across the state of North Carolina.

Committee Chair Jim Wylie announced that the contractor would begin construction on the Memorial Garden and Columbarium the first week of August, with completion scheduled for October 15, 2000. The groundbreaking ceremony and dedication would follow the 11:00 am worship service on August 6, 2000.

In the August 14, 2000 *Connections*, Bo Prosser announced that two new Sunday School classes would begin on August 27. First, the Lifestyles Class for mid-30s to mid-40s would explore the spiritual relevance of issues that affected everyday living. Greg and Kimberlie Thompson and Hunter and Janis Cook would be the leaders. Second, a Celebration of Disciple for All Adults class would use the book *A Celebration of Disciple* with Steve Goad and Becky

Stout as the leaders.

On August 27, 2000, the Sanctuary Choir presented an end-of-summer concert, "An Evening of Choral Favorites." Choir members selected many of the anthems for this delightful and varied program, directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Pat Long.

The Women of Providence were very active in late August and early September 2000. First, they sponsored a program entitled Music and Missions, with Suzanne Cadenhead as the guest speaker. She shared with them her joys and heartaches of being the spouse of a minister. The second program, "Partners in the Harvest," related to the North Carolina Missions Offering and Week of Prayer, September 3-10. The guest speaker was Irma Duke, previous Director of the North Carolina WMU. The Women's Conference entitled "Celebrating Women" with its theme of "Synergy and Synchronicity" followed on September 16, with keynote speaker Sharon Decker.

On September 30, 2000, the Student Music Ministry sponsored "Dinner Bravo" with two seatings. The evening consisted of a delightful and elegant candlelight Italian dinner and musical entertainment provided by the Sanctuary Choir, who sang at the tables, with Pat Long featured on the piano. Funds raised benefited the High School Choir Concert and Christian Heritage Tour to England in June 2001.

On Sunday, October 1, Providence hosted the Metropolitan Music Ministries fifteenth annual Celebration of Music in Worship, directed by Dr. Martha Iley and Rev. Deborah Clark. Dr. Luther Wade was the service lay reader. The purpose of the annual celebration is to advance the mission of Metropolitan Music Ministries, which is to "share the gifts of music for the glory of God." The organization was founded in 1984 to provide live musical performances and devotional programs for a variety of individuals in need and agencies that serve them, including homeless shelters, nursing homes, prisons, churches and cultural organizations. The ministry also provides annual educational scholarship support to promising college music students who want to pursue careers in church music and music therapy.

On October 3, 2000, the Partners in Mission Group had as their guest speaker Sue Ellen Helms, Director of Christian Women's Job

Corps in Charlotte. She spoke on this new ministry of WMU.

October 8 was Commitment to Grow Sunday, with a goal of at least 1,000 in Sunday School. The actual attendance was 727.

In October 2000, the congregation approved a “Faith Covenant of Providence Baptist Church and the Church at Weddington.” As the sponsoring church, Providence agreed to sponsor the following for Weddington:

1. Prayer support on an ongoing basis.
2. A Lead Team of nine members to provide advice and serve as liaison between the two congregations.
3. Initial funding of \$17,000 with supplemental funding to be determined on a year-to-year basis.
4. Preaching assistance provided by ministerial staff until church calls a pastor. Bo Prosser was primary person.

In the October 9, 2000 *Connections*, Jim Martin announced that the 2001 Stewardship Emphasis theme would be “Reaching Up-In-Out,” as taken from the approved church Long-Range Plan:

The phrase ‘Reaching Up, Reaching In, and Reaching Out’ is a succinct way of classifying what Providence Baptist Church is all about: Worship, Discipleship and Nurturing, and Missions including evangelism.....The proposed 2001 Ministry Budget is the first budget to reflect some of the strategies of the plan.

During the October 29, 2000, 11:00 am worship service, the Stewardship Committee invited two recipients of Providence’s mission efforts. Karen Stahr was the major recipient of our relief flood efforts in the eastern part of North Carolina. Bobbie Reid was associated with Providence because of her family’s involvement in the Jackson Park Ministry and the Habitat for Humanity House. Both were present as part of the third segment of our Stewardship Emphasis Campaign.

From November 3-4, 2000, Providence hosted the Renovare Regional Conference: A Journey of Personal Spiritual Renewal. The focus of Renovare Ministries is to help individuals and the church restore balance and deepen their relationship with God. They embrace six great classical Christian traditions as a practical strategy for growth: The Prayer-Filled Life, The Virtuous Life, The Spirit-Empowered Life, The Compassionate Life, The Word-Centered Life,

and The Sacramental Life.

In the November 6 *Connections*, Jim Martin announced that Sam Allen had joined the staff as Food Service Director. Prior to joining Providence, Sam had 12 years of experience in the culinary arts and food service industry. His most recent position was with Belmont Abbey College.

On November 19, 2000, Providence members were inspired by Paul Alexander's "live-in-the-round" dramatizations of The Psalms, Miracles, and Parables. It was a marvelous performance — storytelling at its best — an ancient story within a modern parable, catching the many facets of Christ's teaching.

In the December 3, 2000 *Connections*, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

On Friday, December 1, we had our First Friday at Providence. For those who were not there and are asking, 'What is First Friday at Providence?' First Friday is an evening of fun, fellowship and entertainment on the first Friday of each month. First Friday is geared toward the entire church. This is not a program just for the seniors or just for the young married couples. First Fridays are a great way for everyone in our church to get together and have fun as a church family.

The Week of Prayer for World Missions was December 4-8, 2000, with the theme, "Dispelling the Darkness." Guest speakers were Bo Prosser and Yvonne Keefer, Director of Kansas-Nebraska WMU and Coordinator of Overseas Missions Partnerships. The Providence Christmas offering goal was \$45,000.

The Music Ministry began the Christmas music season on December 10 with an Advent Concert entitled "There's a Song in the Air," featuring the Middle School and High School Choirs. On December 17, the Sanctuary Choir presented "A Feast of Carols" for its Christmas Concert, directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Pat Long.

The December Mission Focus was the church-wide Christmas Project Partnership with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. The Providence goal was to purchase 700 hams for needy families, along with gifts and nonperishable food items. Providence youth and other volunteers would then ride with Charlotte police officers to deliver the items to needy families prior to

Christmas. The project continues today.

The year 2000 concluded with the December 24 annual Candlelight and Communion Service entitled “Joy To The World Through A Simple Birth.” There was only one worship service on December 31 with the theme, “Whose Star Are You Following?”

During Pastor Cadenhead’s absence in 2000, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Otis Andrews, Pastor, Glenwood Hills Baptist Church, Macon, Georgia

Rev. Angela Clark, Minister to Children

Dr. Richard Foster, Professor of Spiritual Formation, Azusa Pacific University, California

Dr. Bill Leonard, Dean, Wake Forest University Divinity School

Rev. Jim Martin, Business Administrator

Rev. Tom Ogburn, Asst. Coordinator for Mission Teams and Church Mobilization for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Dr. Bo Prosser, Associate Pastor and Adult Educator

Rev. David Woody, Minister to Youth

In the January 2, 2001 *Connections*, Pastor Cadenhead announced that the annual Winter Bible Study was the book of James: *James is a brief but rich New Testament book that warrants quality attention. When compared with other books of the Bible, there are some very interesting characteristics of the book of James.*

On January 8, 2001, Pastor Cadenhead wrote a letter to all church members concerning the 2001 budget:

I must say at the beginning that this letter comes to you as a challenge, but the challenge is different than what you might expect. My challenge relates to our 2001 budget which we have not yet pledged. Most of you know that there have been other years when we missed the mark and cautiously went ahead with the budget anyway. This year, however, the miss was over \$300,000. Needless to say, we cannot proceed with 2001 plans. But, my challenge is not to find a way to squeeze more pledge dollars from you.....My challenge takes two forms. First, let’s use these weeks of renewed focus as a time for spiritual growth, a time for honest introspection and prayer as to how we can grow into responsible stewards of

the blessings God graciously placed before us. We use these resources every day with little thought. This is a time to grow individually. Second, my challenge to you is that as a church we become more unified in our ministry and service.....

On January 14, 2001, the congregation participated in our Habitat House Dedication. It was a great day of celebration in assisting Bobbie and Dennis Reid in becoming proud homeowners.

On January 21, the Student Music Ministry presented "Songs in Extraordinary Time," a concert of sacred choral and bell music featuring the High School Choir, Bells and Ensemble. The performance was directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Pat Long.

February 2001 began with a Weekend Marriage Enrichment Experience. As Bo Prosser stated:

Once a year, our marriages need a fine tuning. Actually, more than once a year, but this weekend will help us reexamine our marriage and family priorities. Marriage is NOT a fairy tale. Happily-ever-afters must be planned for and worked towards. This weekend allows us to refocus, to be intentional, and to learn from one another. This is NOT a 'touchy-feely' weekend. This is a weekend that will have a lasting impact on your marriage.

The WMU was active in February 2001 with the annual Women on Mission Workday coordinated by Penny Hewett. Next came the "Beyond Belief 2001" Women's Prayer Retreat led by Anita Pangle, Sharon Winstead and Bunnie Walker.

In the January 29, 2001 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced that the church Long-Range Plan was to be revised:

We know what we want to happen but don't know what to call it! I am talking about the listening sessions that are scheduled.....You may have noticed that we have changed the name of these sessions at least twice. We have changed the name because of concern that you might misunderstand the purpose of these meetings. We are now calling them 'Programs and Facilities Workshops.' This was changed from 'Revisioning Sessions' because it sounded too much like we were going to do another Long-Range Vision Plan,

and that is not the intent.

On February 23-24, 2001, the Student Music Ministry presented "That's Entertainment," a High School Dinner Theater. The students served dinner and then gave a magnificent vocal concert. The dinner proceeds were used to support the High School Choir tour to England during the summer of 2001.

The Week of Prayer for North American Missions was March 4-11, 2001. The Providence Easter Offering goal was \$14,000 to be divided among the Annie Armstrong Fund, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Summer Youth Mission Trip to South Carolina. The guest speakers for the week were Jimmie and Sandie Creech of the Charleston Outreach Program.

The February 19, 2001 **Connections** announced that Stephen Cook would be ordained at Ardmore Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. Stephen grew up in Providence, the son of Hunter and Janis Cook.

The March 2001 highlight was the North Carolina Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Gathering at Providence. The two-day event brought several hundred Baptists from across North Carolina. Bonnie Adams coordinated the many volunteers who served meals and made the gathering a special time for the participants.

In the March 19, 2001 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead focused upon church worship and gave four suggestions to help make it more effective:

As a worship leader for many years, I can tell you honestly that in every worship service I can sense very quickly whether the people are open and willingly giving themselves to the moment or whether they are waiting to see if I can do 'it' to them. Granted, there are some days when it clicks better than others, but when we approach worship with willing expectation and honest preparation, something good is always going to happen. If you are interested in making worship more meaningful, let me make four suggestions that seriously run the risk of oversimplifying the issue:

1. *Come to worship.*
2. *Pray about worship at Providence.*
3. *Worship must involve us physically.*
4. *Take responsibility for worship and*

responsibility for yourself.

In late March and April, members were encouraged to make appointments for the 2001 Pictorial Directory. On April 6, there was a Parent/Youth Celebration Banquet with guest entertainer Steve Brogan, a Ventriloquist. It was a fun evening.

The March 26, 2001, **Connections** gave a congratulations to Keith Bethea for receiving the Baptist Leaders Scholarship at Gardner-Webb University. Keith is the son of Pauline and the late John Bethea.

Providence observed Holy Week April 8-14, 2001. Holy Week is the final week of Lent, from Palm Sunday through Easter Eve. During this week, Christians relive the events of Jesus' last week on earth. Providence concluded the week with the Maundy Thursday Service, ending in a Silent Communion.

Pastor Cadenhead announced in mid-April that Providence had been offered an opportunity to create a new ministry through a partnership with Baptist Metrolina Ministries:

This is a pilot project they will provide at no cost to us, a person to serve as a voluntary staff member and offer the services of a Minister of Gift Planning. This person can provide individual guidance and assistance for people as they seek to be good stewards of their resources, especially at times when decisions must be made for long-term planning. This individual would assist us in the development of our church's endowment program and make it more of a vital part of our future. The minister who is being offered to us is Rev. Richard Bailey, a retired minister who has served in this capacity for 30 years.

Rev. Bailey still serves in this capacity today.

Bo Prosser announced in late April that the Church at Weddington had 100 persons in attendance for the first time. In addition, a Pastor Search Committee had been formed and was preparing to seek a pastor.

Doug Haney, Minister of Music, announced that on April 25 a Boston Piano would be dedicated in memory of choir member and deacon, John Bethea: *Pat Long will play a piano piece, 'Surely the Presence of the Lord Is In This Place,' and we will have a prayer of dedication for this instrument which has already been used in*

worship for several months.

The last April 2001 activity was the Youth Barbecue Dinner and Square Dance on April 27. Jeff Summers cooked the dinner, and the proceeds were used to support the Summer Mission Trip.

From April 27-29, 2001, the Middle School Choir embarked on their fourth annual spring choir tour. First came a full day of fun at Wrightsville Beach, Screen Gems Studio Tour, and a late night tour of historic First Baptist Church of Wilmington, led by former Providence Intern, Lin Carter, who was then the Minister of Education/Children in Wilmington. Sunday, the Middle School Singers led in worship at the First Baptist Church of Wilmington in the morning and at the First Baptist Church of Wadesboro in the evening. On May 9, they presented a home concert at Providence. Doug Haney and Debra Wallace led the choir on the tour.

On May 6, 2001, the Music Ministry presented "Gospel Mass: A Unique Worship Experience," based on the sounds of the contemporary African-American Church written by Robert Ray. The Sanctuary Choir filled the sanctuary with the sounds of Black Gospel music. Guest soloists for the performance were Alisha Carr, Cliff Herrington and Wanda Nelson from the Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte.

Saturday, May 19, 2001, was the second Operation Inasmuch Mission Activity. As Pastor Cadenhead stated:

Operation Inasmuch is a wonderful outreach project of our church. In the course of one day, we involve hundreds of members as we give ourselves to a multitude of projects. It gives us an opportunity to touch people in the name of Christ as we become channels of His love that must never stop with us. We will meet new friends, make new friends and offer encouragement to people we would, otherwise, never encounter.

Anniversary Sunday was May 20, 2001. There was no Sunday School and only one worship service at 10:30 am, followed by dinner-on-the-grounds. Randy Ballard and his volunteers did a marvelous job. As he stated in the May 21 **Connections**:*Thanks to those who brought all the wonderful food, to Sam and his kitchen staff for the chicken, and to Kenneth and his staff for all their hard work. And thanks to you for the wonderful fellowship we shared as*

we celebrated our church's 47th Anniversary together.

In the June 5, 2001 **Connections**, Minister with Children Angela Clark announced her resignation:

After prayerful consideration and confident assurance that God is leading me to a new place of ministry and learning, I am resigning. I would request that my service conclude with an 'Ordination Service' on Sunday, August 19.....In September, I will become a Pastoral Care Resident at Carolinas Medical Center. During my seven years here, God has used the ministry opportunities and the wonderful people at Providence to help me discover and develop the skills that have led me toward a new area of calling. In obedience to God's call, I must step out in faith.

Angela had been a very positive and stabilizing influence in the Children's Ministry and would be missed.

In the June 5 **Connections**, Bo Prosser gave an update on the Church at Weddington: *They have voted to call Lin Carter as their first official pastor. The Carters will be moving 'home' from Wilmington to begin full-time service as Pastor the second week of July.....Continue to pray for the Church at Weddington and the Carters as this new journey begins.*

The Music Ministry invited the congregation to a pre-tour Home Concert and Commissioning Service on June 13, 2001, by the High School Choir, Ensemble and Bells, entitled "Praise We Sing to Thee." From June 14-25, 2001, they participated in a Concert and Spiritual Heritage Tour to England. The 44 students and 15 chaperones made concert appearances in Cambridge, Canterbury, London, Oxford, Rye, Warwick and York, England.

The annual Vacation Bible School was June 18-22, 2001 with the theme, "On the Farm." It was a fun week with focus upon fellowship, spiritual values and a return to nature.

July 2001 was a relatively quiet month. However, during the week of July 22-29, 51 youth and adults were in Charleston, South Carolina, for the Youth Mission Trip. The group worked on homes in the inner-city and led Block Parties at different multi-housing sites. David Woody, Minister to Youth, coordinated the project.

The July 30 **Connections** announced that Providence would participate in the Habitat for Humanity 2001 Fall Blitz, beginning on

September 22. The Church at Weddington, Candlewyck Baptist, and Sardis Baptist had agreed to partner with Providence in the building of this home. Aubrey Arant and Steve Goad were the project co-chairs.

August 2001 began with a Grief and Loss Seminar entitled "Reaching for Healing and Recovery." In the August 7 **Connections**, Bo Prosser said: *Harold Ivan Smith will be joining us on August 10-12 for a special weekend of Grief Work. He will work with deacons, Carelinks teams and church leaders on Friday night. He will lead in a Memorial Celebration on Sunday evening. This will be a wonderful time for us.*

In the August 13 **Connections**, David Woody stated:

The Mission Trip to Charleston was incredible! We worked on five houses, shared our energy at a Community Bible Festival with an apartment complex, and spent time with each other and God. We all came home with a better understanding of mission work and the idea that God's light needs to shine through us all the time. Thank you, Providence, for understanding the importance of faith development in teenagers and supporting this ministry.

Providence said goodbye to Angela Clark on Sunday evening August 19. She was ordained in a spiritually moving service followed by a reception. In the August 20, 2001 **Connections**, she responded: *You have loved me, blessed me and taught me so much the seven years I served beside you.....Thank you for the wonderful party! The minister's robe, white stole, and children's stole will be a loving reminder of you every time I wear them.*

In the same **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

Allow me to offer one additional word of thanks to you for your support and response to the Ordination Service for Angela this past Sunday. While it was certainly a defining moment for her, it was also a very meaningful moment for us as well. I am very proud that our church does not believe that one's call by God and blessing by a church is to be determined by gender. The service also reminded me that we, as a church, need to make 'the calling' of ministers more of a focus than we do. Sometimes we get so caught up in the maintenance of the church that we forget the priority of

'sending' people 'out.'

On August 20, 2001, Committee Chair Jim Wylie announced that: *On Friday, August 3, contractors made the final touchups on the Memorial Garden. A Dedication Service was held at the Garden site on August 12 following the 11:00 am worship service. It is now time to begin a new level of activity in the life of the Garden which is good news to you who long ago purchased a niche or plaque and have been patiently waiting.*

In the August 27, 2001 **Connections**, Bo Prosser stated:

Yes, things are moving forward! The ministry and church of the Lord cannot stand still. People need the Lord. Individuals need to experience the grace and love of Christ through the forgiveness of sin and through an awareness of healing for their hurts. We are not just going through the motions. Church has a purpose and the family of faith must reach out to others. Let us take our responsibilities seriously this year. Please consider the following challenges as you serve: Be consistent; Be prepared; Be caring; Be responsible; and Be a steward.

September 2001 began with Focus on North Carolina Missions: "Mobilizing for Ministry." As Marge Stith stated in the Providence on Mission announcement: *Summer is over and September is upon us, which brings us to our emphasis on mission opportunities across North Carolina. We are encouraged to pray that God will empower those who tell His story to people who do not know, to learn about opportunities where our hands are needed, and to give our money willingly and generously that people's needs, both spiritual and physical, may be met.* The Providence North Carolina Missions Goal was \$7,000. The Focus on North Carolina Missions began on September 5 with the "Mobilizing for Ministry Missions Program." The guest speaker was George Crouch, President of the North Carolina Baptist Men.

Pastor Cadenhead announced in the September 10, 2001, **Connections** that:

.....Six of us from Providence will be flying to Timisoara, Romania, where our team will spend a very busy week. The primary goal of the mission trip is to determine whether or not there is valid potential for a partnership by Providence with

First Baptist Timisoara for the purpose of doing mission work together. The routine of the group will be quite varied, and that is by design. The varied nature of the schedule will give the group a good sense of life in Romania, particularly the poor, rural villages.....Upon returning, the team will then decide whether to recommend to Providence that we proceed any further. Please pray for the group.

Bo Prosser announced that the fall seminars for Christian Living Courses would begin on Wednesday, September 12: *Politics, Denominationalism, and North Carolina Baptists* (Cadenhead); *Discovering Your Spiritual Giftedness* (Prosser and Mike Walker); *The Gospel According to Mayberry* (Randy Ballard); *Understanding Religions in our Own Backyard* (Scottie Stamper); *Passover, the Sabbath, and Old Testament Roots* (Marti Halliburton); and *Bible Book Study* (Harry Harden).

Minister of Music Doug Haney announced on September 10, 2001, that student choirs had topped 100 in enrollment for the first time. The High School Choir had 59 singers enrolled, and 44 singers were enrolled in the Middle School Choir.

The September 17, 2001, **Connections** opened with: *We offer special prayers for the families of loved ones involved in the New York City, Washington, D. C. and Pennsylvania tragedies, and special prayers for all government leaders and workers as they deal with the aftermath of these tragedies. We refer to this today as "9/11" in reference to terrorists who flew airplanes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and crash in Pennsylvania, killing nearly 3,000 persons.*

In the same **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead said: *As your pastor, I am encouraging each of us, myself included, to come back to the basics after this horrible loss. I hope the life-sustaining dynamics of church fellowship, faith and a personal relationship with Christ will be our guiding forces in our response to the events of last week.*

On September 30, 2001, Providence hosted the sixteenth annual Metropolitan Music Ministries Celebration of Sacred Music. There were choirs from four area churches in addition to the Choir of Choral Directors and the Bella Voice Singers of the Charlotte Children's Choir. Providence member Dr. Martha Iley served as

President of the Ministries.

October 2001 began with the Student Ministry sponsored “Dinner Bravo” with Italian food. The entertainment was by members of the Sanctuary Choir and Pat Long on the piano. Dinner proceeds were used to benefit the High School Choir.

David Woody, Minister to Youth, announced that on October 8, he would be taking a sabbatical during the month of October and spend the month working with the Center for Congregational Health based in Winston-Salem. As he stated:

They have the resources and knowledge to help churches facing all types of crises that are common among churches — personnel conflicts, theological differences, and general problems that cause things to stop. I will be going out on some consultation visits, doing a lot of reading, journaling, and learning about the conflicts in churches. My goal is to take what I learn about ‘big church’ and apply that to youth ministry.

The 2002 Ministry Budget of \$2,600,000 was discussed and approved on October 21 at the quarterly church conference. It represented a 4% increase over the 2001 budget. The “Step Forward In Faith” Commitment Sunday was set for November 4, 2001, during both morning worship services.

Long-time church member Frank Litaker passed away on October 26. Frank had been one of Providence’s key mission leaders for many years, both locally and across North Carolina in Habitat for Humanity, Operation In As Much, and flood relief projects. He would be missed.

In the October 29, 2001 **Connections**, Tom Philson, Providence Lay Representative, announced:

Through a grant from the Ely Lilly Endowment, the Divinity School at Duke University and Providence Baptist Church have entered into a partnership called the Teaching Congregation Program.

During the course of their study at Duke, students will spend an internship at one or more of the participating churches as a staff member. Our job at Providence, as a Teaching Congregation, is to involve students in the life and workings of our church. The assignment of the intern will be

determined based on the needs and desires of the congregation and the students. The enrollment in the Duke Divinity School is approximately 23% Baptist. There will be no cost to Providence for participation in this program.

The October 29 **Connections** announced that Eddie and Cindy Ring Ruble, our Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries, were coming back to the states in November. Members of the congregation were asked to help provide them with their housing and furnishings.

November 2001 began with Celebrating Women on November 3 with the theme, "Nurturing Your Spirit." The keynote speaker was Caroline M. Jones, speaker, writer and encourager. Amy Shoemaker was the Steering Committee Chair.

The November 12, 2001, **Connections** announced that the church would have "Wednesday on Tuesday" Thanksgiving Service at 6:30 pm on November 20. Church music programs and other activities would be on Wednesday night, as usual.

The Week of Prayer for World Missions was December 3-7, 2001, and special prayer sessions were led by Bo Prosser. The two keynote speakers were Harriet Lennon, a retired missionary to Thailand, and Melinda Staples, missionary to India and daughter of Ed and Maxie Haire. The Providence Christmas Offering for World Missions was \$35,000.

During November and December 2001, Providence participated in three local mission projects: Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes with a goal of 500, the Jackson Park Ministry, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Providence Youth Church-wide Christmas Project to buy hams and collect gifts for needy families.

The 2001 Christmas music programs began on December 2 with the Children's Choir Ministry Concert "Christmas Pageant," featuring the choirs, chimes and bells. On December 9, the Middle School Choir, Middle School Bells, Student String Ensemble, High School Choir, High School Bells and High School Ensemble presented "He Is Born." On December 16, the Sanctuary Choir presented "Some Children See Him" for its Christmas Concert.

In the December 3, 2001 **Connections**, Pastor Lin Carter stated:
The month of November marked the first anniversary of the Church at Weddington worshipping together! We celebrated

by telling the story of the church, short though it may be, each Sunday in the month. Some were able to speak about the earliest stages of formation when the church was no more than the dream of some Providence Baptist Church members. Others spoke of moving to the Weddington community from out of state and finding a new family, a new home within this congregation.....You should know that I am always so proud to say to new friends I meet that Providence Baptist in Charlotte is our sponsor church.

December 4, 2001, marked Darlene Martin's tenth anniversary as Sunday School Secretary. Her duties include preparing our records, entering attendance, placing inserts in the Sunday School books, updating the records, ordering literature, and other activities that make the logistics of Sunday School go smoothly.

In the December 10, 2001 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

This year we will have two different Christmas Eve services. The difference is more than just the times. They will have two different formats. The first service, 'Children, Carols and Candles,' will begin at 4:30 pm and is designed especially for families with small children. We are encouraging families to bring their entire family. The second service, 'Candlelight Communion Service,' begins at 6:30 pm. It will be a more traditional format which will include readings, communion, music by the choir and candle lighting.

The December 17, 2001, **Connections** announced that Jonathan R. Hayes of Boy Scout Troop 166 had received his Eagle Scout Award. Jonathan is the son of Linda and Richard Hayes. In addition, Jeffery L. Hooks received a Masters of Engineering Management on December 15 from UNC-Charlotte. Jeff is the son of David and Karen Miller and grandson of Wade and Hazel Bumgarner.

During Pastor Cadenhead's absence in 2001, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Jack Causey, Retired Pastor, First Baptist, Statesville
 Rev. Sandie Creech, Charleston, SC Outreach Program
 Dr. Peter Dugulescu, Pastor, First Baptist Church,

Timisoara, Romania

Rev. Frank Marks, Retired Pastor, Eastern Hills Baptist Church and Providence Member

Dr. Bo Prosser, Associate Pastor and Adult Educator

Dr. Jim Royston, Executive Director, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina

Dr. Wayne Stacy, Dean, Gardner-Webb University Divinity School

Dr. Dan Vestal, Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Rev. David Woody, Minister to Youth

The year 2002 began with Pastor Cadenhead's "Reflections" statement:

The expectation we often have of January is one of inertia. After all, we have just concluded the very busy season of Christmas, a wonderful season which required a lot of energy. So, our tendency is to take January off, so to speak. My invitation to you is that we quickly do away with the expected inertia and make January an exciting month. Winter may have finally arrived and the days are short. Yet, my hope is that when cold and dreary January is done, we can say 'Wow.' That was a great month! Wish we could do it again.

Charter member Harry Moss passed away on January 3, 2002. Harry was a Christian who expressed his joy in the Lord by sharing his blessings with many and especially those unable to care for themselves. He and his family loved Providence and donated the beautiful Schantz Pipe Organ for the congregation to enjoy.

On January 12-13, 2002, the Music Ministry sponsored a Music Workshop. The guest Director was Dr. Michael Hawn, Associate Professor of Church Music at the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, who was widely known for his work with music ministry with children and sacred music and worship. In addition to working with the choirs, Dr. Hawn led the music and directed the Sanctuary Choir during the morning worship services.

January 2002 was a busy month. On Sunday, January 20, Bo Prosser began an Intergenerational Sunday School Class composed of young adults, middle-aged adults and some older adults. The

object was to learn from one another.

On January 27, the Music Ministry sponsored “Kyle Matthews in Worship and Concert.” Kyle was a well-known singer/songwriter and performer. He led in his own special brand of worship on Sunday morning and thrilled members with his musical styles on Sunday evening. As Bo Prosser stated: *Come ‘See for Yourself’ as Kyle communicates God’s truth by combining his love for Scripture and his love for music in a way that provokes deeper questions and leads people to see for themselves just what it is that God has in store for them. This is another great opportunity to bring friends from the community. You’ll be glad you were at this one!!*

Next came the January 29, 2002, Career Development Workshop. As Co-leader Tom O’Neal stated: *Come and participate with us. This will be a time for reflection and self-understanding. You may need to ‘reframe’ your current path or just tweak your skill-set.* Last were the Listening Sessions held on January 30 by the Minister with Children’s Search Committee to develop a profile for screening candidates. The committee was chaired by Anita Pangle.

In the January 21, 2002 **Connectons**, Bo Prosser announced: *A Malaysia flag is hoisted on the Mission Flagpole at this time because our own Dr. Harry Poovey is on special assignment with the North Carolina Baptist Men in Malaysia, January 20-February 2. This special project involves only ten men from North Carolina. Since Harry served as a missionary in that part of the world and speaks Mandarin Chinese, he will be working with this people group.*

February 2002 began with the WMU Missions Action Workday. Penny Hewett and Anne Grosch coordinated the workday activities. This was followed on February 6 by the Divorce Recovery Workshop Sessions, an eight-week workshop designed for those who had been recently separated or divorced. Scottie Stamper, Minister to Singles, coordinated the workshop.

Providence began a “Worship Education 4’s, 5’s, First Graders and Their Parents” during the 11:00 am February worship services. As Bo Prosser and Caron Clark stated: *We will exit to the fellowship hall during the first hymn. This will be a time to talk about ‘Big Church’ and to learn about the elements of worship. We will also talk to parents about how to care for their children in the pew and worship at the same time!*

Church Business Administrator Jim Martin published an article entitled “I Thought You Would Like To Know” in the February *Connectons* to show how 2001 designated offerings were given for missions:

World Hunger	IMB/SBC World Missions
Room in the Inn	Baptist Children’s Homes
IBTS – Prague	Romania Mission OIAM
NYC/DC Relief	Lottie Moon
CBF Global	Home Missions
Honduras Trip	India Mission Trip
Youth Mission Trip	Habitat House
Jackson Park	Chile Missions
State Missions	Police Project Hams
Mildred Massey Fund	

These designated gifts were in addition to our budgeted missions expenditures. Also, some mission projects are conducted without tracking receipts through our records, such as Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes.

On February 2-3, 2002, the Music Ministry sponsored a workshop for the High School Choir featuring Terry Goolsby, an adult and youth choir clinician who coordinated the music ministry of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. During the Sunday services, he led the High School Choir beautifully.

The February 11, 2002, *Connections* announced that Providence had joined with the Department of Pastoral Care and Education at Carolinas Medical Center to establish a Carelinks Ministry. At the time, there were six teams of church members assisting other members, and others were needed to assist elderly persons in the church. As Anne Grosch stated: *The Carelinks experience is certainly making a difference in the lives of our Carelinks Partners as well as our team members. We have one central goal and that is to ease the burden that has been placed upon our Care Partners.*

The PrimeTimers met on February 21, 2002. The featured presenter was Tom Gentry, a radio and broadcast veteran of over 40 years. However, the main event was Margaret Corne’s 100th birthday recognition. She died on January 16, 2004, at age 101.

On February 22-23, 2002, the Youth Music Ministry presented its fourth annual High School Dinner Theater, “Dinner and the Movies.”

Participants enjoyed an elegant dinner and marvelous entertainment from the High School Choir. Proceeds from the performances were used to support the choir's concert tour.

In the March 3, 2002 *Connections*, Pastor Cadenhead stated: *In 2001, the deacons decided to set aside a prayer time of ten minutes prior to each worship service on Sunday mornings. There has been some participation but the potential of that prayer time is too important for it to have marginal participation. Therefore, we are shifting the meetings to the Conference Room and inviting anyone who would like to join us to participate.*

The Week of Prayer for Missions in North America was March 11-15 with the theme, "Showing the Way." Each day Bo Prosser held prayer sessions in the upstairs parlor. At the Tuesday luncheon, the guest speaker was Cindy Ring Ruble, a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionary. At both Sunday worship services, the guest preacher was Rev. Bill Freeman from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, who shared his experiences while working with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and volunteers at "Ground Zero" in New York City. The Providence Easter Offering goal for missions in North America was \$14,000.

Bo Prosser announced in mid-March 2002 that he was introducing "The Sunday Morning Connector," a read-all-about-it piece that would include upcoming events as well as Sunday School class attendance information. The object of the "Connector" was to cut down on clutter and coordinate Sunday School information. It was effective and is still being used today.

From March 15-17, 2002, the Youth Ministry sponsored its annual Youth Barbecue prepared by Jeff Summers. The highlight was a Dinner and Square Dance. Proceeds were used to support the High School Summer Mission Trip.

On Sunday, March 17, 2002, Providence members were invited to attend the dedication of Nicole Alexander's new Habitat Home. Providence sponsored and worked on the home along with the Church at Weddington, Sardis Baptist and Candlewyck Baptist.

In the March 18, 2002 *Connections*, Bo Prosser stated:

'Welcome Miss Becky!' Our interim staff is now complete. Becky Stout is up and running as our Interim Minister to Children. She brings wonderful energy and excitement. Her

two main tasks immediately are to continue our commitment to quality Sunday School and to help me get Vacation Bible School ready. She is a good team member and will help us get ready for the next page in our ministry to children and families. Becky is working directly with children from kindergarten through grade 5. Caron Clark is our Interim Minister to Preschoolers, and she works with bed babies through age 4. These two women are a welcomed addition to our education staff.

Much of March and April 2002 was occupied with the \$14,000 Easter Offering Goal for Missions in North America, one-third of which would go to support the Summer Youth Mission Trip to Smyrna, Tennessee; planning for the Vacation Bible School, and the April 21 Red Cross Blood Drive at Providence, coordinated by Peg Heavner and Barbara Berry.

In the April 8, 2002 **Connections**, Minister of Congregational Care Scottie Stamper stated: *The caring that Christians do comes from something beyond ourselves.....it's Christ-life in each of us. The Christ-life is so evident at Providence: Room in the Inn, the Jackson Park Ministry, CareLinks, WMU, MOMS, WeeHands, Habitat for Humanity, etc. Have you found your place to share your Christ-life through the ministries of Providence? Opportunities abound! Allow the Christ-life to shine through you!*

In the April 15 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced:

Caron Clark has resigned as Minister of Weekday Education, effective April 30, for personal and family reasons. Caron came to Providence with the goal of bringing stability to the Weekday Ministry. In her eight years, she has accomplished that goal and another one that is just as important. Our Weekday Program exists for the purpose of ministry, and Caron made her gifts of ministry available to that program. She has taught us all that the stress and demands of a Weekday Program should never override the opportunities for ministering to people in need. She has truly been a minister in the Weekday setting. We are grateful for all that she has done.

On April 15, 2002, Bo Prosser announced that the Sunday School Council had adopted a new Mission Vision Statement:

The Mission Vision for the Bible Teaching Ministry of Providence Baptist Church is Connecting People and God in Christ through Bible Study, Fellowship, Service and Outreach! Quality People Teaching, Quality People Reaching!

David Miller, Sunday School Director, led the Council in its composition of the Mission Vision.

From April 27-29, 2002, the Senior Adult Choir took their music “on the road.” They traveled to New Bern where they participated in the Sunday morning worship services at the historic First Baptist Church of New Bern and presented a musical program that evening at a church-wide Senior Adult Banquet. On Monday, April 29, the choir joined other groups for the State Music Festival in Greensboro.

In addition, the choir has sung not only for worship services and programs at Providence but for other churches and nursing homes in the Charlotte area. They have sung at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina, and at such churches as Freemason Street Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia, and Maranatha Baptist in Plains, Georgia, the church attended by former President Jimmy Carter and his family. The 40-voice choir was directed by and accompanied by Pat Long, Music Associate and Organist.

In the May 6, 2002 **Connections**, Minister to Youth David Woody announced his resignation effective June 14:

.....The next section of my journey has been made clear to me. I have been called as Minister of Faith Development at Providence Baptist Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The opportunity in Charleston is exciting and scary. Part of my responsibilities will be in Youth Ministry. The other part will be working with adults. I will also have a regular opportunity to preach and assist in worship planning. I am excited about the new responsibilities and opportunities, but scared because I have never done all of this before. I will miss you immensely!

In the same **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced that the first intern from the Duke Divinity School “Teaching Congregations” Partnership had been selected. Kacey Reynolds would begin her work the week after Mother’s Day and remain

until the first of August. She would be supervised by the pastor and would assist in pastoral matters during the summer.

The two primary May 2002 church activities were: (1) Operation In As Much, the all-day community mission outreach project on May 18 and Anniversary Sunday on May 19; (2) The Health Ministry “Hip and Knee Pain Solutions Seminar” on May 20, led by Nurse Reba Petrosky from Presbyterian Orthopedic Hospital. Parish Nurse Marti Todd coordinated the function.

In the May 20, 2002 *Connections*, Pastor Cadenhead shared some of his vision and hopes for Providence’s future:

First of all, somehow, someway, we must develop an attitude of growth. Second, there are some specifics that I, as pastor, place before you. For example, numbers must become important to us. I am asking that we set our growth goal for the next five years to 1,200 for the average Sunday School attendance.....To accomplish this goal we must look honestly at just about everything we do. And, finally, we must make our organization and our building fit our plan. We cannot wait for the future to get here to begin preparation.

June 2002 was a busy month, beginning with the Baccalaureate Service for the Class of 2002 on June 2. The Growth Strategy Meeting followed on June 6. Two receptions for departing staff members followed. First, Maxine Dunn retired after 29 years of dedicated service as Financial Secretary. She was recognized at both morning services on June 9 and given a reception that afternoon. Second, a reception was held on June 11 for David Woody after six quality years as Minister to Youth.

On June 12, 2002, the High School Choir, Ensemble and Bells departed for a five-day concert tour through Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Georgia, ending with the Home Concert on June 19. The choir was directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Pat Long.

The annual Vacation Bible School was June 17-21 with the theme, “Marketplace 29 A. D.: A Bibletimes Experience.” Becky Stout and Caron Clark coordinated the Bible School activities.

Business Administrator Jim Martin announced on June 17 that Patsy Stump had joined the staff as the new Financial Secretary: *She brings to the job a capability to handle required financial procedures*

of a church our size. She and her husband, Jim, were members of the church. Jim Martin also announced that Lu Fowler had celebrated her tenth anniversary on the staff as the Media Specialist responsible for **Connections** and **Focus**, promotions and producing printed materials for the staff.

On June 26, 2002, the Music Ministry presented "Freedom's Thanksgiving," a celebration of freedom featuring "The Testament of Freedom" by Randall Thompson, performed by the combined adult choirs of Providence and the First Baptist Church of Gastonia. The concert honored military, law enforcement, fire and emergency personnel. A picnic-on-the-grounds followed the concert.

In the June 17, 2002 **Connections**, Bo Prosser, in effect, announced his resignation as Associate Pastor/Adult Educator:

On Wednesday, June 26, I will be presented to the Coordinating Council of the National Cooperative Baptist Fellowship to become the Coordinator for Congregational Life. If approved, I will accept their offer. Since early February, we have been in conversation with the National Cooperative Baptist Fellowship about this assignment. I have NEVER had a more gut-wrenching, prayer-filled decision before me. This is a position for which God has been preparing me for 20 years. YOU have been preparing me for this over the last seven and one-half years! Your friendship has been a deep and lasting one. Your affirmation, love, and trust have inspired me to share the "Providence" story all over the nation. This decision is most difficult, but one God has definitely prepared for me.....I wanted you to hear this first from me. I'm grateful for God's providence in our lives, but I'm especially grateful for God's Providence Church in my life today.

Dr. Bo was approved by the National Cooperative Baptist Fellowship on June 26, 2002, and accepted the call. Bo will be fondly remembered for his "down-to-earth" good-naturedness, hugs, disdain for "wearing socks," and many positive contributions to Providence during his nearly eight years as Minister of Education and Associate Pastor. He especially deserves a "special thank you" for leading and coordinating the interim period between Pastors Bugg and Cadenhead.

In an interview with Bo just prior to his departure, the author asked: *Bo, if you could do one thing that would be the most significant for Providence's growth and ministry, what would it be?* His reply, without hesitation, was: *Build 50,000 square feet of Sunday School space behind the Children's Building and build it quickly.* His work and ministry have been sorely missed and the recruitment of an Adult Educator continues today.

On July 1, 2002, Jim Martin announced that in May, Dawn O'Neal had completed eight years as Receptionist and Doug Haney had completed seven years as Minister of Music. In June, Lu Fowler completed ten years as Media Specialist and Pastor Cadenhead celebrated four years.

In the July 15, 2002 **Connections**, Brian Foreman, new Interim Minister of Youth, announced that on July 21, 68 youth and adults would be leaving for the Wherry Housing Cooperative in Smyrna, Tennessee, where they would engage in tasks ranging from construction to field clearing to Vacation Bible School. The Wherry Cooperative was a ministry of the Smyrna Assembly. The 2002 Youth Mission Trip theme was "God At Work In Our Lives."

Dr. Bo Prosser's last day at Providence was Sunday, July 28, with a reception for the Prossers that afternoon. In the July 29 **Connections**, Bo responded: *Thank you for everything! In typical Providence fashion, you overwhelmed us yesterday. Thank you for the wonderful reception, the many hugs and handshakes, the multitude of well-wishes, and breath-taking love offering.....Your friendship and love have motivated me through these years. Thank you!*

The key "word" in August 2002 was Renewal. As Pastor Cadenhead stated in the August 12 **Connections**:

In just a few days we will involve ourselves in something that we have not had in quite some time, a series of services of renewal. We have invited several well-known and very capable people to lead us during this time. Yet, their task is only to serve as facilitators. They can no more bring renewal to this church than I can promise rain in the next 24 hours. If our spirits are to be renewed, it will happen because we want it and are willing to pray it into reality.

The Renewal Services were August 25-28, 2002, with the theme, "And Renew in Me A Steadfast Heart." On Sunday, August 25, the special music was provided by musician and songwriter Kyle Matthews, who led both morning services and gave a concert in the evening. The Proclaimer was Dr. Gary Redding, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of North Augusta, South Carolina. On Monday evening, Kyle Matthews again led the music. The Proclaimer was Dr. David Hull, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tennessee. On Tuesday, August 27, the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church choir led the music. The Proclaimer was Dr. Clifford Jones, Pastor of the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church of Charlotte. On Wednesday, August 28, the Providence Sanctuary Choir provided the music, and the Proclaimer was Dr. Rodger Murchison, Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Augusta, Georgia.

Pastor Cadenhead summarized the Renewal Services as follows: *Thank you for your support, prayers, and participation. Our guest preachers and musicians did a superb job in leading us. They gave us many, many opportunities for spiritual growth. If you came, there is no need for explanation. The spirit of the services was exciting and challenging. The Renewal Services are over; however, renewal must continue!*

In the August 26, 2002 **Connections**, Jim Martin welcomed Kelly Roney as the new Director of Weekday Education:

Kelly came to Providence from the YWCA Central Carolinas where she was the Family Support Coordinator. She was a UNC-Chapel Hill graduate and also worked toward her Masters in early Childhood Development at Loyola University in Chicago. Kelly brings to this new role exceptional skills and knowledge about children.

The job Kelly assumes is a big one. It is also a very important one for our church. Our Weekday Education Ministry is one of the best ways that our community comes into contact with Providence. Weekday Ministry becomes one of those entry points for many potential members of our church. That, of course, is in addition to the values we pass along to the children entrusted to us.

September 2002 began with the Women on Mission Luncheon with guest speaker George Crouch, President of North Carolina Baptist Men, who shared his experiences from a recently completed mission trip to Israel. From September 4-October 23, 2002, the Wednesday evening seminars for Christian Living were held: *Dealing With Transition: Lessons From The Seasons* (Cadenhead); *Religions In Our Backyard* (Stamper); *Safety 1001 For The Home* (Gaskin); *Carpentry 101 For Missions* (Goad); *Heart 2 Heart* (Todd); and *Taking Care of Business* (Martin).

The focus in September was on the North Carolina Missions Offering with the theme, "Light Shall Shine Out Of Darkness." The offering provides the entire operating budget of the North Carolina WMU and the North Carolina Baptist Men. In addition, the offering supports many of the Mission Growth and Evangelism Ministries, such as church planning and language churches.

In the September 2, 2002 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

September 11 is approaching and the scenes of last year continue to roll over and over in our minds. As much as we might prefer to forget what happened, it is very important that we do not. We need to remember. We must remember. The event taught us much about our country and about ourselves. These lessons were very expensive and the learning must continue. There are observances and services being held all over the city. Providence will be giving focused attention to this anniversary during our morning worship services this Sunday morning. It is also very appropriate that we will be remembering September 11 by way of Holy Communion, the sacrifice that changed history two thousand years ago.

In the September 9, 2002 **Connections**, Minister of Congregational Care Scottie Stamper announced her resignation: *Beginning September 16, I will be the Music Teacher at Pineville Elementary School. I'm excited about the change and look forward to being with young children. I will continue to be with you at Providence through November 15 on a part-time basis to help tie up loose ends.....Thank you for being the kind of church that nurtures and cares and loves the staff.*

Two new Sunday School classes began in September 2002. The SYNAGO class was designed as a 30's coed class, with leaders Ashley and Hedgie Bartol. The Wednesday night class met at 6:15 pm and studied the Formations lesson from the last Sunday with Jim Stump as class leader.

On September 9, 2002, Minister of Music Doug Haney began a one-month sabbatical/study leave:

*While away from you, I will attend a three-day retreat for 'veteran' ministers, an experience called 'Collegial Community.' Then I will spend 12 days in the Dallas-Fort Worth area observing rehearsals of prominent choral conductors, visiting worship services in various churches and dialoguing with some of the leading Ministers of Music in north Texas. I will conclude my sabbatical with some planned reading and will also research and write one article for **Choristers Guild**, a leading national music journal.*

In the September 23, 2002 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead addressed the topic of changing worship styles:

In local churches today there is no issue that is not receiving more attention and discussion than that of worship, particularly worship style. In many cases it is far more than discussion that is taking place, often the debate is rather heated and it has come to be known in contemporary church language as 'worship wars.' I say all that not to give you a negative impression of the issue, but to point out how emotional something as simple as worship can become. I am not sure what the implications are, but there are more books being written today on worship, specifically worship styles, than any other subject currently in the life of the church.

On Sunday evening, September 29, 2002, Providence hosted the Metropolitan Music Ministries seventeenth annual Celebration of Sacred Music. The concert featured the Johnson C. Smith University Concert Choir, Providence's High School Choir, a Choir of Choral Directors, choirs from Avondale Presbyterian, Covenant Presbyterian and Matthews United Methodist, as well as brass, timpani and soloists.

October 2002 began with the Women on Mission General meeting. The guest speaker was Vivian Poovey, retired Baptist missionary to Europe and Taiwan.

In the September 29, 2002 **Connections**, Business Administrator Jim Martin opened the 2003 Ministry Budget and Stewardship 2003 Campaign:

Now more than ever, Providence's emphasis on the new budget and stewardship is essential to our future. The dreams, plans, and commitments we make now will impact generations to come. We are grateful for the vision of our charter members and those who worked and sacrificed during the first four decades of our church's existence. Now we must face the strategic question: 'Will we commit to grow and be effective in connecting God and people through Christ, or will we simply try to maintain the status quo?' The answer to that question will come one family, one week, one prayer, and one decision at a time. For me, maintaining the status quo is not a viable option. Churches that consciously or unconsciously make this decision create a self-fulfilling prophecy to simply exist without any contextual substance.

The proposed \$2,620,000 annual budget and stewardship campaign was promoted during October 2002 with the theme, "Why Me, Why Now: Stewardship 2003." Sunday, October 27, was Commitment Sunday.

On September 30, 2002, long-time member Woody Player passed away. He would be fondly remembered for his ushering at the 8:30 am worship service and financial support of the church.

On October 12, the Youth Ministry sponsored a Silent Auction and Dinner Bravo, "Just A Broadway Baby." The production featured Noelle Player, former Providence youth and New York entertainer. Proceeds from the auction and dinner were used to support the High School Summer Tours.

On October 14, 2002, long-time member and Deacon Emeritus, Clifford "Chip" Kissiah passed away. Chip would be fondly remembered for his many contributions to Providence.

At the October 20, 2002, quarterly conference, the church approved unanimously the call to Rev. David Jordan as Interim

Associate Pastor. Rev. Jordan would begin his ministry on November 11, 2002, and assist in Sunday School support, Congregational Care and ministry to young families. In addition, he was a gifted preacher and would assist in the pulpit.

At the time, David had been the Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Rockingham since 1997. He had also served churches in Rockville, Maryland, and Washington, D. C. He did his undergraduate work at Furman University, Master of Divinity Degree from Southern Seminary, and would conclude his doctoral work at Columbia Theological Seminary in February 2003. David and Elizabeth have three children, Christopher, Catherine and Olivia.

In mid-October 2002, a new ministry to those who were widowed began. The support group called themselves the “New Beginnings.” The coordinators were Carole Allen and Pauline Bethea.

November 2002 began with the Baptist Women’s World Day of Prayer. The two guest speakers were Connie Andrews, former Providence member and retired missionary to Chile, and Carol Hughes, Crisis Assistance Counselor.

From November 8-10, the High School Choir joined over 400 singers from seven states in a Choral Festival held at the First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Tennessee, and Carson-Newman College. The festival was sponsored by the Youthcue Organization to promote choral excellence in sacred music and included rehearsals led by nationally known Youth Choir Clinician Randy Edwards. It concluded with a Grand Festival Concert on Sunday, accompanied by members of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra. Doug and Lori Haney, Pam Morton and Becky Stout accompanied the group.

The PrimeTimers met on November 21, 2002. The guest musician was Melanie Myers, daughter of Shirley Myers, who grew up in Providence.

In the November 18, 2002 *Connections*, Rev. David Jordan announced:

I would like to invite you to a valuable new opportunity of spiritual growth. ‘Disciple Bible Study’ is a 34-week course specifically designed to help busy folks carve out sacred

time during a busy week to grow spiritually. We work through the Scripture one day at a time with a 30-minute commitment each day for Bible Study and prayer. And then we gather together for a two-hour session at the conclusion of the week to work through what we have studied.....I invite you to join me on this exciting journey of faith.

The classes met on Sunday nights from 5:00-7:00 pm.

December 2002 began with the Women on Mission Prayer Session, with guest speaker Mary D. Saunders, retired missionary from Africa. The seminar theme was "Living the Call," with the focus being placed on the Christmas Missions Offering of \$29,000.

The Christmas Music Season began on December 8 with "The Marvel of This Night" featuring children, students and adult choirs and bells. As Doug Haney explained: *While many years at Providence we offer three separate Christmas concerts by various age groups, this year many of our musicians join to provide a unified and glorious Christmas experience.*

In the December 9, 2002 **Connections**, Doug Haney stated:

It is with much regret that I announce the resignation of Pat Long, our Music Associate/Organist. Pat has served with distinction since September 1996 providing sensitive and artistic worship leadership from the organ and as a superb accompanist to the Sanctuary Choir, Adult Ensemble, High School and Middle School Choirs and Director/Accompanist of the Senior Adult Choir.

Pat's ability as a musician is equaled only by her cooperative spirit and willingness to go the second mile. These are qualities an employer cannot legislate in a job description. All who know her deeply appreciate the gracious and generous spirit she has brought to ministry through music at Providence. Pat will continue her work at least until January 27, 2003.

On December 11, the Preschool Choirs and Children's Chimes and Bells presented "O Come, Little Children.....Jesus Is Born." A Family Carol Sing on December 18 culminated the season.

The church in called conference on December 15, 2002, voted to call Rev. Julia S. Wright as Minister with Children. As Committee Chair Anita Pangle stated in the December 16 **Connections**: *The*

background and ministry of Julia Wright fit well with the ambitious profile we approved as a church. She has demonstrated her energy and enthusiasm for Children's Ministry as she has served 17 years in this area, with the last 14 years at the First Baptist Church of Dalton, Georgia.

Julia Wright, born in 1959 in Dublin, North Carolina, was raised in a strong Baptist family. She graduated from Wake Forest University in 1981 with a degree in Intermediate Education and received her Master of Arts Degree in Religious Education from Southwestern Seminary in 1984. Julia completed Clinical Pastoral Education requirements at Crawford Long Hospital in Atlanta and was ordained to the ministry in April 1995. Julia, husband Jay, and sons, Jackson (6 years) and Jarrett (4 years) moved to Charlotte in February 2003.

Jim Martin, also in the December 8 **Connections**, announced: *We are always proud when one of our own enters the ministry. Chris Morris began as Minister of Youth at the First Baptist Church of Clemmons on November 26. Chris, a member of Providence since 1988, is a graduate of UNC-Charlotte and the Baptist Seminary at Richmond. We extend our prayers and support to Chris as he begins a new ministry endeavor.*

On December 22, 2002, long-time member and barbecue specialist Jeff Summers passed away. He and Faith were dedicated and supportive members. Jeff would be missed.

December 2002 culminated with the Christmas Eve Services on December 24 and the annual Candlelight and Communion Service. There was only one worship service on December 29, with Rev. David Jordan preaching.

Aubrey Arant passed away on December 26, 2002. Aubrey and Inez were dedicated members who helped start Room in the Inn, the Habitat for Humanity Home Building Project and many others. Today, the athletic fields are named the Aubrey Arant Athletic Fields in his memory. He would be missed.

During Pastor Cadenhead's absence in 2002, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Rev. Bob Freeman, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Volunteer,
Atlanta, Georgia

Dr. David Hull, Pastor, First Baptist, Knoxville, Tennessee

Dr. Clifford Jones, Pastor, Friendship Baptist, Charlotte

Rev. David Jordan, Interim Associate Pastor

Dr. Rodger Murchison, Associate Pastor, First Baptist Church, Augusta, Georgia

Dr. Bo Prosser, Associate Pastor and Adult Educator

Dr. Gary Redding, Pastor, First Baptist Church, North Augusta, South Carolina

Ms. Kacey Reynolds, Duke University Summer Intern

Ms. Cindy Ruble, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Missionary to Indonesia

The year 2003 began with Pastor Cadenhead's statement:

Allow me to offer some thoughts about two matters that are very important to me as we begin the New Year. First, I want to share with you what I am recommending as a focus for our church as we begin 2003.....My hope is that we can designate this year as the 'Year of the Bible.' A second matter is both a plan and a need. My hope is that by mid-January we will be ready to offer assistance in all of our parking lots on Sundays. We are in the process of forming teams to assist people as they arrive for worship and Sunday School. These teams will assist people in locating parking spaces and offer a helping hand.....An added boost to this program is that a generous gift, just shared with me, will allow us to purchase two transportation vehicles to transport our seniors and families with small children.

In addition to the assistance that can be provided, just think of the first impressions by our guests as they are greeted on their first visit. This ministry is so simple but can result in huge rewards.

This is going to be a great year, one filled with limitless possibilities. Remember, it is time for the 'second half' and the game has already begun. We need players, not spectators.

In the January 6, 2003 **Connections**, Parish Nurse Marti Todd announced her resignation:

This month I celebrate three years of ministering to members of Providence. It is at the end of this third year that I announce my resignation from this part-time position. I have

been blessed with an opportunity to work full-time in another position, which will allow me to meet my financial obligations. God called my name to this ministry. Each and every person I have had the privilege to promote health of body, mind and spirit has been a blessing to me.....My last day of service as Parish Nurse will be Sunday, February 3.

On January 10, 2003, a new ministry, First Place, was organized, designed to help people develop spiritual, physical, emotional and mental balance in their lives. The coordinators were Lorene Hall and Jean Nelms.

The PrimeTimers began their year on January 16. The guest speaker was the humorous Margaret Bigger, "Gray-Haired, Grins and Giggles."

In the January 13, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced two new programs: (1) The Wednesday night "Soup for the Spirit" series with Bible Study (I Corinthians), music (Adult Ensemble and Rejoice Trio) and Focused Prayer Time; (2) On February 16, "A Service of Remembrance" for church members who had lost loved ones. As he said, *This evening will not be the end of your journey of grief, but will provide a brief moment of encouragement along the way.*

On January 14, the Women of Providence gathered for food, fun and fellowship, with guest speaker Rev. Amy Jacks Dean who challenged them to be the women God had called them to be. WMU Director Debbi Grosch, Carol DeLaddy and Mary Dees coordinated the gathering.

In the February 3, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

It is with enormous excitement that we welcome Julia Wright to Charlotte and to Providence. Julia and her family moved into their home this week and are now trying to make order out of piles of boxes. But, their things are here and so are they! Julia has been ministering to children at the First Baptist Church in Dalton, Georgia, for 14 years. She brings all that experience and commitment to Providence.

Becky Stout and Caron Clark will continue through the middle of March with similar responsibilities that they handled so well during the long interim. This will give Julia

a chance to become familiar with current programs and allow her a little extra time to make her own assessments.

Laity Sunday was February 9, 2003, with one worship service. The guest speaker was Sam Wyche, former NFL Quarterback and Coach. A covered dish dinner followed the service.

In the February 10, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

A number of things have grown out of our 'Year of the Bible' emphasis. We have added several Bible Study opportunities to the church program. We are including more Scripture in our worship. On Wednesday evenings, many of the songs we sing are directly from the Bible.

In addition, without initiating or requesting it, two anonymous gifts have been made which will provide 500 new Bibles for the sanctuary by Sunday, February 16.....My thanks to the providers of this wonderful addition to worship and Bible Study. The best way to celebrate the 'Year of the Bible' is to develop an even deeper appreciation for this gift from God.

On February 12, following the Wednesday evening service, an informal reception was held for Marti Todd. As Jim Martin stated: *Marti is special to us, and we are confident that God will continue to minister to people through her skills and love for people.*

On February 16, a group of Providence men led by Gary Odom began serving a Sunday morning breakfast to the church and the neighborhood. The breakfast was a full-service "southern style" breakfast, including grits. The cost was what each consumer thought it was worth.

The PrimeTimers met on February 20 for lunch. The guest speaker was Storyteller Marge Stith.

In the February 17, 2003 **Connections**, Doug Haney stated:

We are holding a reception for Pat Long on Sunday, February 23. For more than seven years Pat, our Music Associate/Organist, has supported our singing and our praying as the people of God. Since September 1995, Pat has offered wonderful, worshipful music from the organ and piano to the Providence family. Pat will conclude her ministry among us on Sunday, February 23. She and

husband, Jim, are moving to Charleston. It is an understatement to say that Pat will be missed.

The Week of Prayer for Missions in North America was held March 2-9, 2003, and the Women of Providence held daily prayer sessions at the church. Guest speakers were Tracy Bengtson, former Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Missionary, and Jean Pruett, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship-endorsed Chaplain from the Carolinas Medical Center. Group leaders were Marge Stith, Anne Tunstall and Jean Nelms.

The Men of Providence held a "Missions Emphasis Dinner: Men With A Mission" on March 9. The program included a discussion of mission work being done by Providence men and guest speaker Rev. David Jordan.

When Wilson Godfrey passed away on September 19, 2002, he left his entire estate to the Providence Endowment. It was the largest gift given to the Endowment since its inception. On March 10, Pastor Cadenhead stated: *At the time of his death, Mr. Godfrey had an up-to-date will. His house was in order and because of that, his love for Providence will continue to be demonstrated through the growth of the general endowment and the causes for which the proceeds are used. This is a wonderful example of faithful stewardship and a reminder to all about the importance of planning ahead.*

On Sunday, March 16, 2003, at both morning worship services, the special guest speaker was J. Brent Walker, Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee. He was in the area attending the annual Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina meeting in Gastonia.

Edna Mae Fisher, a former staff member from 1987-1990, began duties as the new Organist/Music Associate on March 17. She was a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University with a degree in church music and organ performance. She came to Providence from St. Stephen United Methodist Church in Charlotte. Edna Mae and husband Ken have two children.

A reception was held on March 19, 2003, for Caron Clark. For nine years, Caron served Providence with commitment and dedication. As John Burd, Personnel Committee Chair, stated:

She has especially given herself to the children of Providence. For eight years she served as our Minister of Weekday Education and by her ministry many of the families in our community formed their first impressions of Providence. Many of these same families have become active members of our congregation. Last year when we needed interim assistance in the preschool area, Caron graciously stepped away from her weekday role and assumed the lead as the Interim Preschool Minister. She has served us well and filled an important need while we were without a Children's Minister.

The PrimeTimers met for lunch on March 20, 2003. The special music program was given by Peg Heavner and Shelia Mitchell-Sasser.

On Thursday, March 20, 2003, the Music Ministry sponsored a concert by the Integrity Quartet from the Louise Mandrell Theater in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Their singing was a soulful, powerful, and timeless music, revealing an overwhelming spirit of courage and faith. The concert included the Providence Adult Ensemble and the 75-voice Men's Chorus from the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church. It was a marvelous evening of song and fellowship.

The annual Jeff Summers Youth Barbecue Fund-raiser was March 21-23, 2003. An added feature was the Saturday night Dinner and Country/Western Line Dance. Proceeds from the dinner were used to support the Youth Summer Mission Trip.

On Sunday evening, March 23, 2003, Chris Morris was ordained into the ministry. As Pastor Cadenhead stated: *The modern church of today must do better in encouraging, affirming and celebrating those who are sent out as ministers. In a day when fewer men and women are responding to the call of ministry, today's church must offer more encouragement. You are invited to be a part of the sending out of one of Providence's young ministers.* Chris had recently been called as Minister of Youth at the First Baptist Church of Clemmons, North Carolina.

In the March 31, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

Providence has just completed another season of 'Room In The Inn.' What a marvelous labor of love this venture is! For seven years, we have opened our facilities on Saturday

evenings to homeless guests. They are provided with delicious meals, warm showers and a clean bed. One way we know the venture is successful is that every year more and more people are wanting to assist and participate. So, to all the teams who labor week after week, I offer a well-deserved thank you from the rest of the congregation. Especially, we say thanks to John Creel for stepping to the moment and taking upon himself the leadership role. To all who participated, thanks for giving these special guests a home and a lot of love.

In the April 7, 2003 **Connections**, it was announced that Providence member George Crouch had been recently honored as Layman of the Year at the annual North Carolina Baptist Missions Conference and Baptist Men's Convention in Winston-Salem. George was the outgoing North Carolina Baptist Men President. He had done volunteer mission work in more than a dozen countries and in several states. George was also actively involved with Habitat for Humanity and other handyman ministry efforts. It was an honor well-deserved.

On April 14, Jim Martin announced two staff changes:

We say goodbye to Jo-Ann Ingersoll on April 30. Jo-Ann has served as Administrative Assistant and more recently as Office Administrator, having joined our staff in November 1998.....She has served us graciously, faithfully, and efficiently. Our sincere thanks and best wishes go with her.

We welcome Beverly Tucker as our new Administrative Assistant to the Business Administrator and the Minister of Education. Beverly comes to us from a background of administrative duties in several industries plus real estate experience. We welcome her to the Providence family.

On April 27 and May 4, 2003, there were seminars for Sunday School Training for Teachers, Inreach and Outreach Leaders. The teachers for these sessions were Brian Foreman, David Jordan, Becky Stout and Julia Wright.

The Music Ministry on April 30 presented the Middle School Choir and Bells Home Concert following their singing tour. On Sunday, May 4, the Sanctuary Choir, with chamber orchestra and guest soloist Anna Perry Gosnell, presented John Rutter's "Feel the

Spirit.” The choir was directed by Doug Haney and accompanied by Edna Mae Fisher.

In the April 28, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

On several occasions in recent days, I have been asked about the status of the Fletcher School. Let me as succinctly as possible describe what we can anticipate. Those of you who are new to our congregation may know very little about the Fletcher School. It is a private school that offers an invaluable service to children with learning disabilities. For quite some time, the school has rented their space from us. Our program and their program have worked side by side each and every day during the school year. Generally speaking, they have shared space that is our educational space on Sunday.

One of the benefits is that they pay us a substantial amount of money each year in rent, an amount in excess of \$100,000 which is included as income for our general budget. The downside is that their growth has been limited, and we have not been able to freely use space that we need as well.

Fletcher is now in the process of constructing their own facility on Sardis Road. Their hope is to be in their new facility by the beginning of the school year.....It may be late summer before we know for sure.....We will keep you informed as to how the transition progresses.

May 2003 began with two mission action projects. As the May 5 **Connections** stated:

Following 9/11 and with the recent turmoil and war in the Middle East, it seems that many folks are left wondering ‘What can I do to help?’ Surely, there are needs that come out of extraordinary situations that call us to respond and provide our time, talents, and treasure to assist. The reality is there are ‘ordinary’ needs that could use our gifts every day. The joy and peace we experience when we help others is something that can be felt every day. So.....how can you help? Operation Inasmuch! On Saturday, May 17, we all have the opportunity to give just a small portion of ourselves to help many others who could use our help and support.

There are a variety of ways EVERYONE can help – including the youth and children of Providence. Please find a way to ‘PLUG IN.’

The second project on May 15 was the collection of foodstuffs for the Hunger Relief in Iraq. This was a joint mission project sponsored by the North Carolina Baptist Men and the North Carolina WMU.

Pastor Cadenhead spent two days at the Duke University Divinity School in early May completing the administrative details of the shared internship program. As a result, Kristen Adkins was assigned as the 2003 intern. Kristen was completing her first year of theological education. As Pastor Cadenhead stated: *My hope is for Kristen to get a glimpse of work throughout our church program. However, she will spend most of her time working in our Children’s Ministry. I am confident she will return to her classes this fall with excitement about ministry in the local church because of her experience at Providence.*

Church member Jesse Oxendine was featured in a May 5, 2003, **Charlotte Observer** article entitled “Holocaust Survivor and Camp Liberator Explain.” Jesse, a World War II veteran who helped liberate a concentration camp, and his friend Henry Hirschmann, a camp survivor, give programs and seminars telling their stories to help educate younger generations about Holocaust history.

Providence celebrated its 49th Anniversary on May 18, 2003. There was just one morning worship service followed by dinner-on-the-grounds. Randy Ballard and his volunteers made the event joyful for all who attended.

In the May 19, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced that:

I would like to place a prayer request before you. On May 24, Dalinda Fairley, Brian Foreman and I will be taking a group of college students on our first annual college mission trip. We will be flying to Miami, Florida, where we will be spending a week working through DOOR of Miami. DOOR is a missions agency that works with people in need in several major cities in the United States. I am encouraged by the fact that our college students want to continue their interest in missions and my hope is that this

trip will begin a tradition that will include lots of experiences in future years.

During Wednesday evening services from May 21-June 18, as a part of the Year of the Bible theme, Pastor Cadenhead and Rev. David Jordan conducted a study of the book of Revelation. *David will begin a five week introduction of the book, and I will continue with a study of the 'seven churches' in Revelation.*

The May 19, 2003, **Connections** also announced that David Jordan had received his Doctor of Ministry Degree from Columbia Theological Seminary on May 17. A special congratulations was in order.

In the May 27, 2003 **Connections**, David Jordan announced: *Welcome to our Providence Summer Reading Program! Our recommended reading for these warm weeks of summer is the Gospel of Luke. We hope that you will take this challenge with your friends and fellow church members and join us as we embark on this rich journey into and through this 'greatest story ever told' by a master storyteller.*

In the June 2, 2003 **Connections**, Personnel Committee Chair John Burd stated: *It is hard to believe that five years have passed by so quickly, but this Sunday, June 8, will mark Dr. Cadenhead's fifth anniversary as our Senior Pastor. As a Providence member and the Personnel Committee, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to him for his tireless, dedicated service to our congregation.*

Church members Connie and Sid Carpenter and their family were featured in the June/July 2003 **Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Magazine** article entitled "Child's Enduring Spirit Enriches Church and Charlotte Community." The article focus was upon their son, Matthew, who was born with cerebral palsy and their efforts to provide a meaningful life for him. Matthew died from a blood clot on December 17, 2000. The family, stunned by grief and anger, asked "Why?" Associate Pastor Bo Prosser delivered the eulogy: *I don't know why, he said. But because of Matthew Carpenter, I am a blessed man: we are a richer community, a better people. With an enormous impact on us all, he faced and conquered a huge mountain of challenge.*

Frazier Park in Charlotte contains a Children's Memorial Walkway. Etched on Matthew's brick are these words:

Unable to talk; He wrote volumes.

Unable to walk; He made great strides.

On June 14, 2003, 62 singers and 15 adult leaders left for a nine-day tour which would include concerts at Independence Hall in Philadelphia and the United Nations in New York City. Other concerts were presented at Anchor House, a drug rehabilitation center in Brooklyn, as well as multiple appearances in churches in the Washington, D. C. area, Connecticut and New York. The High School Choir, Ensemble and Bells were made up of students in grades 9-12. The 2003 tour program title was "Dona nobis pacem – Grant us peace."

The 2003 General Assembly of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship met at the Charlotte Convention Center June 26-28 with the theme, "It's Time! – Being the Presence of Christ." Providence members Connie and Sid Carpenter and Doug Haney were convention participants. Providence served as one of the host churches, with many members serving as volunteers. A special thanks went to Jim Martin, local Arrangements Coordinator for the entire event. Serving on the committee with Jim were Bonnie Adams, Harry Poovey, Earl Pope, Debbi Grosch and Anita Pangle.

The annual Vacation Bible School was held June 23-27 with the theme, "A Heart for Missions." Minister with Children Julia Wright and her staff of volunteers conducted a highly successful school with an enrollment of 400 students.

The Providence Women on Mission met on July 1 at the home of Dorothea Compton. The guest speaker was Kristen Adkins, Providence's summer intern from Duke University.

In the July 14, 2003, **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced:

Let me bring you up-to-date on the progress of several Search Committees that continue to work very hard. The Minister with Youth and Their Families and the Minister of Adult Education Search Committees have been meeting regularly for several months. Their task is a serious one and must be done very carefully. Be assured, however, that they are moving as fast as possible. I have every reason to believe that they could have people in place by the end of the year. The Associate Pastor Search Committee has now been

appointed and will begin their process this month. All three committees deserve our best support and continued prayers.

The High School Summer Mission Trip was to Beaufort, South Carolina, July 20-26, 2003. Providence members were asked to be Care Partners for the youth and adult chaperones headed by Brian Foreman. Care Partners were asked to pray daily and prepare a “care box” for each participant.

In the July 21, 2003 **Connections**, Jim Martin gave an update on the Fletcher School relocation: *Providence has considered TFS to be a mission endeavor to students with special needs for over ten years. We have an excellent reputation in the community for our participation in this cause. Now that TFS is leaving, about September 2, a few months will be needed to evaluate and implement the most effective use of our facilities.*

August 2003 began with preparations to end and begin a church year. The Wednesday evening study of Revelation continued through August, led by David Jordan and Pastor Cadenhead.

By the middle of August, attention began to focus on the “Beginning Again Weekend of Renewal,” August 23-24. It began with the Back to Sunday School Bash, followed by guest Dr. Greg Jones, Dean of the Duke University Divinity School, who led a seminar entitled *Renewal through Forgiveness*. On Sunday during the morning worship services, Dr. Jones was joined by Mark Hayes, a composer and arranger, who led the worship music. That evening, Mark presented a concert entitled “An Evening of Sacred Jazz,” featuring the Sanctuary Choir and a jazz trio.

On August 17, 2003, long-time church member and mission advocate Betty Gilreath passed away. Betty and husband, Frank, participated in many Providence supported mission trips. In addition, Betty served as an officer in the North Carolina Baptist Convention for several years. She would be missed.

In the August 25, 2003 **Connections**, Jim Martin announced that: *Kenneth Barnett, our Facility Manager for 17 years, has notified us that his last day of responsibilities will be August 22. He has accepted a similar position with the Fletcher School at their new facility. Kenneth has served us graciously and cheerfully since December 23, 1985. Our prayers and best wishes go with him in his new venture.*

In the September 2, 2003 *Connections*, WMU Director Debbi Grosch stated:

Our 2003 North Carolina State Missions Offering theme is 'New Beginnings.' September is a month of new beginnings. School for our children has begun a new year. Summer activities have wound down, and we are beginning anew at Providence with missions education, choir programs and Sunday School. With new beginnings comes the opportunity for change and renewal. So, what does this have to do with the State Missions Offering? Much! It's through the gifts made that people, churches, organizations and missions projects find newness a second chance, renewal. The funds received in the annual North Carolina Missions Offering make possible many of the mission ministries of our State Convention, providing the entire operating budgets of the North Carolina WMU and the North Carolina Baptist men. Prayerfully consider your role, your gift, and your commitment to bringing others the 'new beginnings' God has in store.

The Providence offering goal was \$5,000.

The author asked Dr. Harry Poovey, a career missionary, pastor and church member, to give his perspective of missions:

After 43 years in ministry doing missions, the concept/word 'missions' needs redefining. Missions is not simply going somewhere else to tell someone about Jesus. A church does not just give to missions. As the body of Christ, WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD ON MISSION. Missions is telling about Jesus WHEREVER WE ARE, TO WHOMEVER WE CAN, WHILE WE LIVE. The church is the people of God on mission because of the kind of world in which we live, the kind of God we serve, and the kind of command He gave.

Most of us think of missionaries as people we send. This is not exactly the way things are today. We live in a global village where the entire world is accessible in hours. Any one of us can go and do missions. Our church and our state need people who will function as missionaries just as much as anyone who works for the mission boards. God's

work is best done by ordinary people beginning where one lives. No one can hire another to do what God has assigned to him/her.

If the Scriptures have taught me anything at all in our years of doing missions, it is this: ALL ARE CALLED. ALL ARE GIFTED. ALL ARE SENT. We are all called to take missions seriously. We are stronger together than we are alone. Jesus prepared his followers to understand his purpose for coming to earth. He left them with the words found in Matthew 28:19-20. These were the last words Jesus ever spoke to His disciples on earth; therefore, they must have been dynamically important.

My assessment of missions, then, is this. If all are called, all are gifted, and all are sent, the journey never ends. The lingering questions remain. What hinders me from accomplishing God's mission? What hinders me from being an effective missionary? What gifts do I have that enable me to be of service? With so many missions opportunities before me, partnerships in so many parts of the world that make available short-term missions possibilities, what hinders me from volunteering? In conclusion, missions is telling of Christ and His supreme love wherever I am as God provides the opportunity.

Dr. Harry Poovey's message is very simple: MISSIONS IS LAY DRIVEN. We are called to carry forth THE GREAT COMMISSION.

In the September 15, 2003 **Connections**, Jim Martin announced that Charles Waters would replace Kenneth Barnett as Facility Manager, effective September 15: *Charles, an employee in this department since January 1973, has been a faithful employee, most recently being the Maintenance Specialist. However, he has worked in every aspect of our facility maintenance. As we deal with the new schedule because of the relocation of The Fletcher School, Charles will be instrumental in the reconfiguration of the facility management to accommodate the church's schedule and needsWe welcome Charles to this new position and responsibility.*

The PrimeTimers met on September 18, 2003, for lunch. The guest speaker was David Moore, inspirational speaker, entertainer and musician.

On September 21, 2003, Henry and Jan Crouch participated in the morning worship services. As Pastor Cadenhead stated: *Since many of you have not had a chance to speak to them since the death of their daughter, Debbie, they will be in the fellowship hall during the Sunday School hour for you to drop in on your way to or from Sunday School. Please keep the Crouches in your prayers.*

In the September 22, 2003 **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead announced the retirement of Anne Bertini: *Anne has been serving our senior adults for 18 years. She has made more home visits than we can record, driven more miles than even she has a record and has led our senior adults on countless entertainment ventures. On November 18, 2003, we will recognize her in our worship services.....As you pass her in the hallways and future events, remember to thank her for a job well-done.*

In the same **Connections**, Pastor Cadenhead stated:

Providence is a very gracious church in providing the ministerial team a four-week sabbatical after five years of service. On September 28, I will head toward a small village called Westray, which is an island in the northern most tip of the Orkney Isles of Scotland.

During my weeks there, I have two primary goals. First, I will be assisting, as well as being hosted by, a small Baptist church of 40 members. I am going at their invitation and look forward to what will likely be a long list of cultural changes for me.

*Second, the time there will also provide an opportunity to begin the manuscript for a new book that I have been wanting to write for a long time.....It will be entitled **God's Call To Be: Being Precedes Doing**. I am grateful to you for providing me the time.*

On September 28, 2003, Providence hosted the Metropolitan Music Ministries eighteenth annual Celebration of Sacred Music. Area church choirs and soloists were featured, along with brass, timpani and organ. A reception followed the inspiring concert.

The 2004 Stewardship Campaign began on September 29, 2003. As Stewardship Committee Chair Clarence Adams stated: *For the next six weeks, we will be focusing on Stewardship 2004. Our theme for the campaign is IN GOD WE TRUST, IN GOD WE GIVE. The primary areas of focus will be worship, missions and fellowship and how each relates to stewardship. Pledge Sunday is November 9. The proposed budget was \$2,720,000 compared to the 2003 budget of \$2,620,000.*

October 2003 began with the Women of Providence Celebration with the theme, "Hope for A Simpler Life." The guest speaker was Joan Hope.

In the October 6, 2003 **Connections**, Jim Martin introduced the new Parish Nurse: *Janis Cobble R.N. is our new Parish Nurse. Janis has a very impressive resume of service as a Registered Nurse in the medical community in Illinois and in Charlotte. She recently joined the Parish Nurse Staff of Presbyterian Hospital. She and her husband James, an ordained minister, are the parents of three daughters. We welcome Janis to the Providence community.*

The church family was saddened on October 15, 2003, to learn of the tragic death of Courtney Leigh Ballard while at college. She was the daughter of Debbie and Randy Ballard, Director of Activities. Dr. Bo Prosser and several former staff members returned to participate in the Memorial Service.

On October 18, the Youth Ministry sponsored Dinner Bravo 2003 and "Dance Like Nobody's Watching," featuring dancer/entertainer Rob Tunstall. Rob, son of Anne and Bob Tunstall, grew up at Providence and participated in the Youth Ministry programs. Proceeds from the auction and dinner benefited the High School Choir.

In called conference on October 19, 2003, the church voted to call Rev. Brian K. Foreman as Minister with Youth and Their Families. Brian, born and raised in Charlotte, was a graduate of Campbell University (1993) with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religion and Christian Ministries. In 1996, he received his Master of Religious Education Degree from Duke University Divinity School. Brian was not new to Providence. For the prior 16 months, he had served as Interim Minister of Youth and from June 1999-June

2002, he had served as Student Ministry Associate and Weekday Ministry Associate.

During October and early November 2003, Providence members focused upon a series of mission projects: Room in the Inn, Jackson Park, Operation Christmas Child, the Christmas Missions Offering, and the Charlotte Police Needy Family Project.

Providence members received an invitation to the Grand Opening of the new Fletcher School campus on November 3. The new campus was located at 8500 Sardis Road.

The Providence Women on Mission met on November 4 to learn more about the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina. The guest speaker was Brenda B. Gray, Executive Vice-President of Development of the Homes.

The PrimeTimers held a very special luncheon on November 20. The entertainment was provided by the Queen Charlotte Chorus.

The Week of Prayer for Global Missions was December 1-5, 2003, with guest speaker Lynn Kinnison, a missionary to Thailand. The Providence Christmas Offering goal was \$40,000.

The Christmas Advent Season began on December 1 with the Family Advent Dinner. As the announcement stated: *Please wear festive clothes and bring a pair of pruning shears. The evening promises to be a special way for your family to begin this Advent Season!*

The Christmas Music Season began on December 7 with the Children's Music Ministry presentation of "Good News! Jesus Is Born!" On December 14, the Student Music Ministry presented "Christmas Canticles: Carols of the Season." This was followed on December 21 by the Sanctuary Choir, Charlotte Symphony Instrumentalists and Charlotte School of Ballet presentation of "A Day of Dancing: Sing of His Love and Dance for Joy!" The music season concluded with two Christmas Eve services, the Children's Carols and Candles Love Feast and the annual Candlelight and Communion Service, which ended with a Christmas missions offering collection.

In the December 29, 2003 **Connections**, Jim Martin stated: *For the past three years we have been sponsoring the Church at Weddington as a mission church with Rev. Lin Carter as the pastor. It is now time to help them purchase ten acres of land to start building*

across from Weddington High School. Providence has agreed to sign the note to borrow funds because the Church at Weddington has never borrowed money before. Providence will also continue to assist them financially.

The year 2003 closed with two other announcements. First, there would be a Honduran Mission Trip, January 5-15, 2004. Twelve Providence members would participate, led by George and Mary Ann Crouch. Second, as of December 29, pledges totaled \$2,370,670 toward the proposed budget of \$2,760,000 on the 2004 Stewardship Campaign.

During Pastor Cadenhead's absence in 2003, the following persons filled the Providence pulpit:

Dr. Greg Jones, Dean, Duke University Divinity School

Dr. David Jordan, Interim Associate Pastor

Dr. Harry Poovey, Retired Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Monroe and Providence Member

Mr. J. Brent Walker, Executive Director of the Baptist Joint Committee

Mr. Sam Wyche, Former NFL Football Player and Coach

As the year 2004 opens for Providence, two Search Committees are preparing recommendations for two staff vacancies: First, the position of Associate Pastor currently being filled by Dr. David Jordan in an interim capacity (In called conference on February 1, the church voted to call Dr. Jordan as Associate Pastor.); and, second, a Minister of Education/Adult Educator that has been open since Dr. Bo Prosser departed for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship on July 28, 2002.

What does the year 2004 and beyond hold for Providence? Pastor Cadenhead in a series of "Four Pastoral Letters to the Congregation" gave us some insight:

In all my years of being a pastor, it has never been clearer to me as to our main task as a church. It begins with what we believe. We believe that the most important thing in life is a relationship with Christ and our main business is the selling and promoting of an experience with Christ. Our mission statement is very clear, 'Connecting People and God in Christ through Worship, Fellowship and Missions.' The effective church in the post-modern era will be one whose

business is to make better and more Christians. One implies the other. We cannot engage those who do not know Christ unless we, on the inside are genuinely seeking to grow as disciples. And, if we truly believe what we say, we will absolutely want others to have the same experience.

I invite you to believe in our common task and claim the opportunities God is giving us. If we cannot answer the 'why' question as we face the future, we will find little meaning and even less energy for the months and years ahead. Understanding what we are about will make everything we do seem more important. You are invited to join hands with a lot of people who feel strongly that our business is worth our best interest.

The focus I am recommending for this calendar year is very appropriate for our 50th Birthday at Providence. The operative word for 2004 will be 'community.' By community are we meaning the ties that we build among ourselves within our church family? Of course, we must give attention to the strengthening of relationships within the walls of our building. A church can never be any stronger than the ties that bind them as a community of faith. As I have said on many occasions, we cannot give away something we don't have.

Yet, our focus on community must take us beyond our own walls to the neighborhood that surrounds us. As a church family, we do not reside in this place on Randolph Road by accident. We are here to connect with the community that surrounds us.

While our church has the strength and potential to reach far beyond our immediate community to our state, country and world, we must never forget the families that live within the sight of our steeple.

The first 50 years in the life of Providence Baptist Church have been solidly based upon the foundation laid in Matthew 28:19-20 – "The Great Commission." The second 50 will be equally measured by how well we tell of Jesus Christ and His supreme love wherever we are as God provides the opportunities.

AMEN



APPENDIX

A.ByLaws.....	452
B.Charter Members.....	465
C.Succession of Pastors and Staff.....	467
D.Summer Youth Associates.....	470
E.Churches Sponsored.....	471
F.Missionaries Supported.....	471
G.Ministers Licensed/Ordained.....	472
H.Annual Budgets/Receipts.....	473
I.Membership Statistics.....	473
J.Deacon Chairs.....	475
K.Deacons Emeritus.....	475
L.Sunday School Superintendents.....	476
M.WMU Directors.....	477
N.Brotherhood Directors.....	477
O.Training Directors.....	478
P.In Memoriam.....	479
Q.Index.....	484

BYLAWS
of
PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH
Charlotte, North Carolina

Revised September 13, 1992

ARTICLE I
PRINCIPAL OFFICE

The principal office of Providence Baptist Church of Charlotte, N. C. (the "Church") and its initial registered office shall be located at 4921 Randolph Road, Charlotte, N. C.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP

1. Presentation for Membership. Anyone wishing to become a member of the Church shall present himself/herself for membership when the invitation is extended at a worship service. The congregation will be asked to affirm the prospect for membership when he/she has made public his/her confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, a commitment to live with others in His Lordship as revealed in the Scriptures, and a commitment to believer's baptism by immersion if such baptism has not been done. Baptism will be scheduled as quickly as possible given the schedules of the individual and the Church. Baptism by total immersion may be modified to the extent necessary to accommodate the infirm. Following baptism, length of membership will be calculated from the date of presentation and affirmation. (Modified and approved on April 9, 2003)

2. Categories of Members. There shall be two classes of members: Resident Members and Non-Resident Members. Resident members are those members who reside within the area served by the Church. Non-Resident Members are those members who reside outside of the area served by the Church so that they can no longer attend the services of the Church, except that students and members of the military who reside outside of the area served by the Church and Church sponsored missionaries shall be Resident Members. The rights and privileges of Resident Members and Non-Resident Members shall be identical except that only Resident Members shall be entitled to vote.

3. Letter of Dismission. Upon request of a church of like order and faith for a letter of dismission of a member, the Clerk shall, without the necessity of action by the Church, deliver such letter on behalf of the Church.

4. Dismissal. A member shall be dismissed from membership, without a letter of dismission, upon:

- a. The request of the member;
- b. Notification that the member has joined another church of a different faith and order;
- c. Lapse of contact with the Church for five years in the case of a Resident Member or for two years in the case of a Non-Resident Member, provided that no dismissal under this clause shall be effective without a recommendation of dismissal from the Membership Committee to the Church and the approval of the Church; or
- d. Persistent, continuous and open breach of the member's covenant vows, provided that no dismissal under this clause shall be effective unless (i) a three-quarters majority of the Membership Committee shall determine that every possible kindly effort has been undertaken by the Membership Committee, the Deacons, and the member's Sunday School In-Reach contact, to make the action unnecessary and the Membership Committee shall recommend in writing dismissal to the Deacon Body, (ii) the Deacon Body shall present such recommendation of dismissal to the Church, and (iii) three-quarters of the Church present at a business meeting shall approve the dismissal.

ARTICLE III MEETINGS

1. Worship. The Church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training and fellowship.

2. Quarterly Business Meetings. The quarterly business meeting of the Church shall be held on the second Sunday following the quarter end or within six days thereafter. The times and dates shall be scheduled, or if necessary, rescheduled, by any two of the Pastor, the Chair of Deacons, or the Moderator. Notice of all quarterly meetings shall be given by announcement of church services one week prior to the meeting and in the Church's newsletters published the two weeks preceding the meeting.

3. Special Business Meeting.

a. Any two of the Pastor, the Chair of the Deacons, or the Moderator may call a special business meeting of the Church for any reason deemed necessary by such persons.

b. Any Church committee existing pursuant to Article VII of these Bylaws or any group of at least 12 Resident Members may call for a special business meeting. A written notice must be presented to any two of the Pastor, the Chair of the Deacons, or the Moderator and must set forth the agenda of the meeting, a statement explaining the necessity for a special meeting and the motions or recommendations to be presented. The Moderator shall ensure that appropriate notice of the special meeting is provided including the publication of a detailed agenda. A special business meeting must be held within 30 days of the receipt of such a notice.

c. If a special meeting is required pursuant to this Section 3, the time and place of such special business meeting shall be determined upon the agreement of any two of the Pastor, the Chair of the Deacons, or the Moderator. All special business meetings shall be limited to the items set forth in the detailed Agenda. In no event shall a special meeting begin before the conclusion of the worship service.

d. Notice of a special business meeting must set forth in reasonable detail all matters to be raised in the special business meeting and may be given by either or both of the following procedures:

(i) By first class mail sent to each Resident Member at least five days prior to the meeting. Only one notice need be sent to each address at which more than one Resident Member resides; or

(ii) By announcement in the Church's newsletters published in the two weeks preceding the meeting. In addition, where practical, notice shall be given by announcement at church services.

4. Conduct of Meeting.

a. The Church shall establish House Rules relating to the conduct of the business meetings.

b. All business meetings of the Church shall be conducted in an orderly manner and in accordance with the current edition of the House Rules and the latest published edition of Robert's Rules of Order. In the event of a conflict, the House Rules shall control.

5. Quorum. The quorum for the conduct of business shall be in accordance with the current edition of the House Rules. In the event a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be rescheduled for a time not more than 30 days from the originally scheduled meeting and notice shall be given in accordance with Article III, Sections 2 and 3 herein.

6. No Proxies. Voting by proxy will not be permitted. All members in extended session shall be given the opportunity to vote by ballot in the call of ministerial staff and the election of deacons.

ARTICLE IV GOVERNANCE

1. Congregational Governance. The governance of the Church shall be congregational in nature, and the final authority for the operation and management of the affairs of the Church, spiritual and temporal, shall be vested in the membership of the Church, which authority shall be exercised in the manner set forth in these Bylaws. Unless otherwise specified, any action of the Church shall require the approval of a majority of the Resident Members in attendance at any duly called business meeting of the Church at which a quorum is present.

2. Reservation of Authority. All authority not specifically delegated to the ministers, officers, deacons, committees or any other organization of the Church described in these Bylaws shall remain vested in the membership of the Church.

ARTICLE V
CHURCH LEADERS

A. MINISTERS AND CHURCH STAFF

1. The Pastor.

a. The Pastor shall be an ordained Baptist minister and, having been elected to the office of Pastor, shall become a member of the Church.

b. The Pastor shall be called by the Church upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee, in accordance with the procedures set forth below, to serve for as long as the Pastor and the Church mutually agree that the Pastor's service is in accord with the purpose of God and in the best interest of the Church.

c. The Pastor is responsible for providing spiritual instruction and leadership to the members, staff and organizations of the Church. As the senior minister of the Church, the Pastor shall oversee the work of the ministerial staff and provide administrative supervision over the work of the Church.

d. Upon the occurrence of a Pastoral vacancy, the Deacon Body shall initiate procedures leading to the adoption by the Church of a process to select the Pastoral Search Committee. The first duty of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be to prepare a personnel profile for the position and a profile of the church. The profiles shall be presented to the Church for approval. The Pastoral Search Committee shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one candidate at a time. Election shall be by a ballot at a special business meeting of the Church called for each purpose, and an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting shall constitute a call.

e. The Pastor shall continue to serve as Pastor until the relationship is ended by resignation or terminated by the affirmative vote of a majority of those present and voting at a special business meeting of the Church called for such purpose.

2. Ministerial Staff.

a. Members of the ministerial staff shall be called by the Church upon the recommendation of the Ministerial Search Committee and the Pastor in accordance with the procedures set forth below and in accordance with the personnel and financial policies of the Church.

b. The members of the ministerial staff shall be responsible to the Pastor, who shall oversee their work.

c. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy on the ministerial staff, a Ministerial Search Committee shall be selected by the Nominating Committee for approval by the Church. The Ministerial Search Committee shall reflect a broad base of age and organizational groups and shall number not fewer than seven members. The Pastor and the Ministerial Search Committee, with the assistance of the Personnel Committee, shall prepare a personnel profile for the vacant

position. When the Church has approved the personnel profile, the Pastor and the Ministerial Search Committee, with the assistance of the Personnel Committee, will proceed to seek qualified candidates for the position. When the Pastor and the Ministerial Search Committee have identified an acceptable candidate, consistent with the personnel profile, and when the candidate has accepted the guidelines approved by the Personnel and Finance Committees, the Ministerial Search Committee shall recommend to the Church at a special business meeting of the Church called for such purpose, that the Church issue a call to the candidate. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting by ballot shall constitute a call.

d. Each member of the ministerial staff shall serve until the relationship is terminated upon the earliest of (i) the resignation of the member of the ministerial staff, (ii) the expiration of a Church-approved written term, or (iii) the affirmative vote of a majority of those present and voting at a special business meeting of the Church called for such purpose.

3. Other Staff Members.

a. Other staff members shall be hired in accordance with the personnel and financial policies of the Church.

b. Such staff members shall be responsible to their immediate supervisors or designated staff members.

c. All changes in staff shall be reported to the Personnel Committee.

B. DEACONS

1. Mission. The mission of deacons of the Church is to provide leadership in facilitating the proclamation of the Gospel, promote the development of programs of education and spiritual training and diligently seek the winning of souls to Jesus Christ. In accomplishing the above mission, the deacons, through personal involvement in a spirit of servanthood and in cooperation with the ministers and the Church members shall:

a. Guide and support the expression of our corporate worship.

b. Guide and support the mission activities of the Church, including evangelism.

c. Guide and support the Church's program of Christian education.

d. Assure the effective operation of appropriate programs to minister with spiritual concern to the needs of the members of the Church.

e. Assist the ministers in the observance of ordinances of the Church.

f. Coordinate and facilitate the activities of all Church committees and organizations.

g. Consider and make recommendations to the Church on any significant matter affecting the Church and its programs.

h. Consider, as requested, recommendations for Church actions from all committees and organizations.

i. Guide and support planning for the future of the Church.

2. Number and Term. The Deacon Body shall consist of 48 deacons who shall be elected for staggered terms of three years. After completion of a full three-year term or after completion of a partial term of at least 18 months, a deacon shall not be eligible for reelection until a lapse of at least two* years. (*Church Conference Action on April 17, 2002)

3. Nomination. A special Nominating Committee consisting of the standing Nominating Committee, the Chair of Deacons, the Sunday School Director, the Church Training Director, the Women's Missionary Union Director, the Brotherhood Director and the Pastor shall nominate from the active membership of the Church at least 20 candidates. The names of all nominees who have accepted the nomination in accordance with Article V, Section B.5 shall be published in the Church newsletters and the church bulletin for at least two consecutive weeks during the four-week period prior to the election. Additional nominations may be made from the floor, only at the morning worship services on the Sundays at which the names of the nominees are included in the Church bulletin. Candidates nominated from the floor must accept the nomination in accordance with Article V, Section B.5 in order to be included in the ballot.

4. Election. Election of deacons shall be by ballot during the morning worship services on the Sunday designated in the Church newsletters and the church bulletin. Members who will be absent on that designated Sunday may submit a ballot during Church office business hours and Wednesday evening activities, beginning the Monday following the close of Deacon nominations and ending the Friday prior to election Sunday. Members shall be entitled to vote for up to 16 nominees. The votes shall be collected and tabulated by a committee composed of deacons present whose terms of service expire the year in which the election is held and who are ineligible for reelection. Votes for all nominees shall be tabulated and a record thereof kept. Any vacancies among the deacons during the year shall be filled in order by the non-elected nominees receiving the most votes.

5. Qualifications. All nominees for the office of deacon shall exhibit Christian maturity and shall have demonstrated their desire and willingness to support the program of the Church. All nominees shall have been a member of the Church for at least the past two years, or, if previously a member of the Church for at least two years, shall have been a member of the Church for at least the past year. Each nominee will be counseled concerning the Church's expectations of a deacon and will be requested to study the Scriptures concerning the qualifications and responsibilities of a deacon, including Genesis 28:22, Malachi 3:18, Deuteronomy 14:22, Acts 6:3, and I Timothy 3:8-13, prior to acceptance of the nomination for the office of deacon. Acceptance of the nomination shall constitute a certification by the nominee to the Church that, in the nominee's judgment, the nominee possesses the scriptural qualifications for the office of deacon and that, if elected, the nominee will accept and carry out the duties and responsibilities of a deacon of the Church.

6. Duties. The Deacon Body shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. To carry out the mission of the deacons.
- b. To organize itself in such a manner and to elect a chair and such other offices as it shall from time to time deem appropriate and useful to carry out the mission of the deacons.
- c. To adopt rules and procedures for the governance of the Deacon Body (including, without limitation, rules and procedures concerning a recommendation for dismissal of a deacon by the Deacon Body for failure to meet reasonable expectations of a member of the Deacon Body) and to publish the rules and procedures promoting the effective functioning of the Deacon Body.
- d. To prepare and maintain the Committee Manual of Providence Baptist Church, which manual, and any changes thereto, shall be effective only upon the approval of the Church.
- e. To prepare and maintain the Policy Manual of Providence Baptist Church, which shall consist of all policies that have been approved by the Church.
- f. To the extent that the Church as a nonprofit corporation is required by law to have and act through a board of directors, the Deacon Body shall constitute and serve as the board of directors of the Church, provided, however, the authority of the Deacon Body shall be limited as set forth in these Bylaws.
- g. To ensure that a comprehensive review and evaluation of the programs of the Church is conducted no less than once every three years with the objective that such programs remain effective, efficient and relevant to the mission of the Church.
- h. To perform other duties as assigned by the Church.

7. Deacons Emeritus. A person who has served nine or more years as an active deacon of the Church and who is 65 years of age or older is eligible to be designated as a deacon emeritus. Candidates for deacon emeritus will be nominated by the Deacon Body and the nominations will be submitted to the Church for approval. A deacon emeritus will be entitled to notice of all meetings of the Deacon Body and will be entitled to attend all such meetings and shall have the privilege of the floor, but shall not be entitled to vote.

C. MODERATOR AND ASSISTANT MODERATOR

1. Nomination and Election. The Nominating Committee, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Committee Manual of Providence Baptist Church, shall nominate at least two persons for the position of Moderator. Prior to the election, additional nominations shall be taken from the floor at a business meeting of the Church. The member receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected Moderator; the member receiving the next highest number of votes shall be elected Assistant Moderator.

2. Term. The Moderator and Assistant Moderator shall serve a term of two years. No person who serves a full two-year term as Moderator or Assistant Moderator shall be eligible for reelection to the same office until the lapse of at least one year following the end of such term. If the Moderator resigns or is unable to fulfill his or her term, then the Assistant Moderator shall become the Moderator and a new Assistant Moderator shall be elected.

3. Duties. The Moderator shall:

a. Ensure that appropriate notice of all business meetings of the Church is provided, including the publication of a detailed agenda.

b. Preside at all business meetings of the Church consistent with the guidelines for a presiding officer in the latest published edition of Robert's Rules of Order and the House Rules.

4. Absence of Moderator. In the absence of the Moderator, the Assistant Moderator shall carry out the duties of the Moderator. In the Assistant Moderator's absence, the Clerk shall call the meeting to order and an Acting Moderator shall be elected by nominations from the floor.

D. CLERK

1. Nomination and Election. The Nominating Committee, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Committee Manual of Providence Baptist Church, shall nominate at least one person for the position of Clerk. Prior to the election of the Clerk, additional nominations shall be taken from the floor at a business meeting of the Church. The member receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected; provided that if such member does not receive a majority of the votes cast, a fun-off vote shall be held between the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes.

2. Term. The Clerk shall serve a term of two years. No person who serves a full two-year term as Clerk shall be eligible for reelection until the lapse of at least one year following the end of such term.

3. Duties. The Clerk shall be responsible for:

a. Maintaining an accurate roll of the Church membership with dates of admission and dismission and other pertinent information and issuing letters of dismission as authorized by the Church and these Bylaws.

b. Recording on tape, preparing accurate and complete minutes of all business meetings. Tapes shall be preserved until approval of the minutes.

c. Preparing the Annual Association Letters and other official communications on behalf of the Church.

d. Notifying all Church leaders, members of committees and messengers of their election or appointment.

e. Maintaining the corporate seal of the Church and affixing the seal to official documents of the Church, as appropriate.

f. Designating one of the church Parliamentarians, who shall have been appointed by the Nominating Committee pursuant to its procedures, to serve as Parliamentarian for each business meeting of the Church.

4. Assistant Clerks. The Clerk may appoint one or more Assistant Clerks who shall assist the Clerk in the performance of the duties listed in Article V, Section D.3.

E. CHURCH LEADERS WITH AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

Official documents of the Church may be executed by the Chair of Deacons in the capacity of the President of the Church, by the Clerk in the capacity of the Secretary of the Church and by the Chair of the Finance Committee in the capacity of the Treasurer of the Church.

ARTICLE VI CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

1. General.

a. Church Control. All organizations of the Church shall be subject to the control of the Church and the directors of the organizations shall report to the Church on a regular basis at the business meetings of the Church. The Pastor or the Pastor's designated staff representative shall be an ex-officio member of all the organizations named. The Deacon Body shall facilitate the activities of all Church Organizations.

b. Directors. Each organization described in this Article VI shall have a director. The Nominating Committee, in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Committee Manual of Providence Baptist Church, shall nominate at least one person for the position of director of each organization. Prior to the election of each director, additional nominations shall be taken from the floor at a business meeting of the Church. The member receiving the highest vote shall be elected as the director of the organization; provided that if such member does not receive a majority of the votes cast, a run-off vote shall be held between the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes. Each director shall serve a term of two years and may be elected for one additional successive two-year term. No person who serves two successive two-year terms as a director of an organization shall be eligible for reelection to such position until the lapse of at least one year following the end of the second such term.

2. Sunday School.

a. General. There shall be a Sunday School, divided into divisions and classes for all ages and conducted under the general direction of the Sunday

School Director and the Sunday School Council. The Sunday School Council shall consist of the directors of the age group divisions of the Sunday School. Sunday School is the organization of the Church established to carry out the Great Commission in the local community by reaching out to the people, teaching them the Bible, winning them to Christ and involving them in the life and work of the Church.

b. Purpose. The purposes of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Biblical revelation; to lead in reaching persons for Christ and for membership in the Church; to encourage its members to become Sunday School teachers; and to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and the denomination. To accomplish these purposes, all Sunday School classes will use a teaching program approved by procedures established by the Sunday School Council.

3. Discipleship Training.

a. General. There shall be a Discipleship Training program organized as appropriate to facilitate a variety of learning opportunities and conducted under the general direction of the Discipleship Training Director. Discipleship Training is the organization of the Church established to train the Church's members to apply faithfully Christian truths in daily living.

b. Purpose. The primary purpose of the Discipleship Training program shall be to develop and offer training opportunities to assist members of the Church in their personal growth as Christian disciples and the development of their spiritual gifts. The Discipleship Training program will accomplish its purpose by training Church members in performing the responsibilities of a member of the Church, including the assumption of positions of leadership and by teaching Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, Church policy and organization.

4. Women's Missionary Union

a. General. There shall be a Women's Missionary Union with a director and such other officers and forms of organization as the members of the Women's Missionary Union shall deem necessary. The Women's Missionary Union is the primary organization of the Church responsible for ongoing missions education.

b. Purpose. The purposes of the Women's Missionary Union shall be to provide missions organizations for women, girls and preschoolers; to lead and encourage the members and families of the Church to be involved in mission study, mission action, personal witnessing and mission support; to provide organization and leadership for special missions events and projects and to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and the denomination.

5. Brotherhood.

a. General. There shall be a Brotherhood with a director and such other officers and forms of organization as the members of the Brotherhood may deem necessary.

b. Purpose. The purposes of the Brotherhood shall be to provide an integrating organization to assist in the fulfillment of the goals of the Church; to foster brotherhood among the men and boys of the Church; to provide missions education and mission action projects for the Church; and to contribute to an awareness of the concerns of the community to enable members to become better Christian neighbors.

6. Usher Co-Captains. These individuals shall be elected annually by the church, upon nomination by the Nominating Committee, and serve as general officers of the church. There is no limit on the length of service of Co-captains.

a. The number of Co-captains shall be no less than two, but as many as is necessary to effectively and efficiently provide for usher support as required.

b. The Co-captains shall enlist as many persons as needed to perform the responsibilities of ushers. Such responsibilities shall include, but is not limited to, the orderly seating and counting of worshipers, distribution of the worship orders/bulletins, literature, and receiving offerings.

c. The Co-captains shall have the responsibility of providing usher support during all regular and special services of the church.

d. The Co-captains shall assist, or assign another usher to assist the Finance Committee representative/teller at each worship service, and inform the representative regarding who will be assisting.

e. The Co-captains shall coordinate their activities with the music office. (October 20, 2002)

ARTICLE VII CHURCH COMMITTEES

1. General. All committees of the Church shall be responsible to the Church and shall report to the Church on a regular basis at the business meetings of the Church. The Pastor or the Pastor's designated staff representative shall be an ex-officio member of each committee. The Deacon Body shall coordinate and facilitate the activities of all Church committees.

2. Standing Committee. All standing committees shall have such duties and number of members, and shall operate in accordance with such procedures, as are set forth in the Committee Manual of Providence Baptist Church, as such manual is amended from time to time in accordance with these Bylaws.

3. Special Committees. Special Committees may be created by the Church from time to time at a business meeting of the Church and will have such members, duties and duration, and will operate in accordance with such procedures, as are determined by the Church.

ARTICLE VIII
REAL PROPERTY

1. Title. Title to all real property of the Church shall be in the name of the Church.

2. Disposition. Real property of the Church used for worship and ministry purposes may not be sold, mortgaged, conveyed, transferred, or otherwise encumbered without the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present at business meetings called for such purpose. All other real property of the Church may be sold, mortgaged, conveyed or otherwise transferred by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at any business meeting of the Church.

ARTICLE IX
AFFILIATIONS

The Church shall have full power and authority to associate itself with and participate in, through duly elected representatives, those organizations which have as their primary purpose the promotion and support of missions, education and benevolence of the character and in keeping with the purpose of the Church as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation.

ARTICLE X
AMENDMENTS

1. Referral to Deacon Body. All requests for amendments of these Bylaws must be in writing and shall be submitted to the Chair of the Deacons for study by the Deacon Body and issuance of an opinion by the Deacon Body to the Church. The Deacon Body shall have 60 days within which to issue an opinion concerning any proposed amendment, alteration or revision to these Bylaws. The Deacon Body shall issue an opinion and the proposal shall be published in the manner set forth in Article III, Sections 2 and 3, and the proposal shall be voted on by the Church. If the Deacon Body shall fail to issue an opinion within 60 days, then any member or Church committee may make a proposal to the Church for such amendment, alteration or revision and it shall thereafter be submitted to a vote of the Church in accordance with Article X, Section 2 of the Bylaws.

2. Vote of the Church. Amendment of these Bylaws shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at a business meeting of the Church; provided, however, that no amendment may reduce any super majority voting requirement contained in these Bylaws unless such amendment is approved by the number of members that would have been required to have taken action under such voting requirement.

CHARTER MEMBERS

- Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Barksdale
 Mrs. C. H. Beacham
 Mrs. Roland H. Beam
 Mr. Teddy Beam
 Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Bennick
 Mr. E. T. Bennick, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. James H. Benton
 Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Borders
 Mr. J. P. Bowden
 Dr. Amos S. Bumgardner
 Mr. and Mrs. L. Franklin Bumgardner
 Mr. Carl Bumgardner
 Mr. Franklin Bumgardner, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Howard M. Byrum
 Mr. and Mrs. Troy P. Corne
 Miss Judy Corne
 Mrs. T. H. Crews
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred P. Culbreth
 Mrs. John Doyle
 Mr. Hanson Dunbar
 Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Echerd, Jr.
 Miss Ann Echerd
 Mr. Eddie Echerd
 Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Edwards, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Edwards
 Mrs. T. L. Finger
 Mr. Mike Finger
 Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Freeman
 Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Funderburk
 Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Funderburk
 Mr. James F. Galland, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. James J. Gallant.
 Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Garrison, Sr.
 Mr. Herbert Garrison, Jr.
 Miss Janet Garrison
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Gill
 Mr. and Mrs. M. Clyde Griffin
 Mr. and Mrs. Howard Grimes, Sr.
 Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Grimes
 Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Hammon
 Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Hardaway, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Spencer L. Hege
 Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Helms
 Mr. Joe Helms
 Mr./ Mrs. Robert L. Hollingsworth
 Mr. and Mrs. T. N. Hord
 Miss Diane Hord
 Mr. and Mrs. Wistar C. Howe
 Mr. and Mrs. Bryce B. Iley
 Mr. and Mrs. Donald C. Jeffries
 Mr. Don Jeffries
 Mr. and Mrs. J. Clyde Jenkins
 Miss Emma Johnson
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Jones
 Mr. and Mrs. Henry G. Keziah
 Mrs. Marjorie King
 Mr. Samuel M. King
 Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Kizziah
 Mr. and Mrs. Ken W. Lail
 Mr. and Mrs. John P. Lewis
 Mrs. John S. Link
 Mr. and Mrs. Bomar Lowrance
 Miss Mary Martha Lowrance
 Mr. John Lowrance
 Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Martin, Jr.
 Miss Eva McGinnis
 Mrs. B. B. McMahan
 Miss Carol Mease
 Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Miller, Jr.
 Mrs. W. G. Morrison
 Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Moss, Jr.
 Mr. Robert E. Moss
 Mr. and Mrs. Ben O'Dell
 Mrs. Sallie Parris
 Mr. and Mrs. D. S. Perry
 Mr. A. Bruce Petty, Jr.
 Mrs. A. B. Petty
 Mr. Charles E. Petty

CHARTER MEMBERS

(Continued)

Mr. and Mrs. J. Howard Pike
 Miss Brenda Pike
 Mr. Charles Pike
 Miss Janice Pike
 Mr. James Norman Pike
 Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Porter, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert Price
 Mrs. Charles W. Ramsey, Jr.
 Mrs. Mannis R. Rea
 Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ross
 Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Scruggs, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Smythe
 Mr. and Mrs. Dayton A. Starnes
 Mr. and Mrs. John W. Taylor
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Tribble
 Miss Dorothy M. Tribble
 Mr. Robert L. Tribble, III
 Mr. and Mrs. Russell E. Tucker
 Miss Pam Tucker
 Miss Barbara Pike Tweed
 Mr. and Mrs. Gus E. Vinroot
 Mr. Richard Vinroot
 Mr. Robert Vinroot
 Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Vogt, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Walker
 Rev. and Mrs. H. Gordon Weekley
 Mr. and Mrs. John W. West
 Rev. and Mrs. Grady Wilson
 Miss Nancy Carol Wilson
 Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Winstead
 Miss Arnette Winstead

SUCCESSION OF PASTORS AND STAFF

SENIOR PASTORS

1955-1967	Rev. H. Gordon Weekley, Jr.
1968-1991	Dr. William H. Crouch
1993-1996	Dr. Charles B. Bugg
1998-	Dr. R. Alton Cadenhead, Jr.

INTERIM SENIOR PASTORS

1954-1955	Dr. Frank R. Moore
1996-1997	Dr. Bill Leonard
1997-1998	Dr. Cecil Sherman

ASSOCIATE PASTORS

1965	Rev. Reece M. Hagler
1974-1976	Dr. Randy Robinson
1981-1989	Rev. Lee McDonald
1990-1991	Rev. Tommy Hall
1991-1996	Dr. Jay Casey
1998-2002	Dr. Bo Prosser
2002-	Dr. David Jordan

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

1956-1958	Wendell Sloan
1959-1964	Oscar S. Whitescarver
1965-1972	Dean Kaufman
1973-1976	Ron B. Bayless
1978-1981	Rev. Wade Tucker
1995-2002	Dr. Bo Prosser
2004-	Rev. Beth McConnell

MINISTERS OF MUSIC

1954-1957	Martha Iley (Interim)
1958	Phillip Gehring (Interim)
1958-1962	Doris M. Gibson (Interim)
1962-1964	Richard Ungerbuehler (Interim)
1964-1965	Alice Ungerbuehler (Interim)
1965	Helen Ann Connell (Interim)
1965	Charles Starnes (Interim)
1965-1968	John W. Sanders (Interim)
1968-1969	Bert Simerson (Interim)
1969-1987	Lowell Dotson (First Full-time)
1987-1988	Hal McIntosh (Interim)

MINISTERS OF MUSIC

(Continued)

1988-1989	Eddie Lockamy (Second Full-time)
1989-1991	Dr. John Blizzard (Interim)
1991-1994	Lee Porter, II (Third Full-time)
1994-1995	Hal Shoemaker (Interim)
1995-	Doug Haney (Fourth Full-time)

MUSIC MINISTRY ASSOCIATES

1979-1987	Rev. Patricia McBrayer
1988-1989	Faye Lockamy
1988-1990	Edna Mae Fisher
1990-1991	Regina M. Graham (Interim)
1991-1993	Jeff Perks
1993-1995	Marty Gregory (Interim)
	Kathy Sipe (Interim)
1995-2003	Patricia Long
2003-	Edna Mae Fisher

MINISTERS WITH YOUTH

1964-1965	Richard Ungerbuehler
1965	Helen Ann Connell
1974-1976	Rev. Randy Robinson
1976-1981	Rev. Steve Hoffman
1982-1983	Rev. Bob Lentz, Jr.
1983-1990	Rev. Tommy Hall
1990-1995	Rev. Tommy Justus
1995-1996	Phillipa Mathis (Interim)
1996-2002	Rev. David Woody
2002-	Rev. Brian Foreman

MINISTERS WITH CHILDREN

1976-1985	Rev. Ed Landrus
1986-1989	Rev. Sue Deaton
1990-1993	Rev. Ann Charles-Craft
1993-1994	Sandra Richardson (Interim)
1994-2001	Rev. Angela Clark
2002-2003	Becky Stout (Interim)
2003-	Rev. Julia Wright

MINISTERS WITH ADULTS

1976-1978	Rev. Bill Andrews
1978-1981	Rev. Wade Tucker

MINISTERS OF ACTIVITIES

1987-1996	Rev. Bobby Butler
1997-	Randy Ballard

MINISTERS WITH SINGLES

1987-1988	Rev. Fred Salley
1997-2002	Scottie Stamper

SENIOR ADULT COORDINATOR

1986-2003	Anne S. Bertini
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MINISTER OF GIFT PLANNING

2001-	Rev. Richard D. Bailey
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BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS

1957-1958	Russ Tucker (Interim)
1977-1980	R. C. Bryson
1981-1992	Wendell Sloan
1992-1995	Richard Landers
1995-1996	Luther Bigby
1997-	Rev. Jim Martin

FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS

1980	Debra Barton
1985-1991	Mattie Lou Edwards
1991-1995	Gordon Mayzik
1995-1999	Elaine and Dennis Frauenhofer
2000-	Sam Allen

PARISH NURSES

2000-2003	Marti Todd
2003-	Janis Cobble

WEEKDAY EDUCATION MINISTRY

1960-1961	Theatus McLean	Kindergarten Director
	Leslie Horton	Assistant Director
1961-1962	Kathleen Nevels	Kindergarten discontinued 8/26/62
1973-1975	Jeanne Fulford	Director Playschool/Kindergarten
1975-1985	Karen Apple	Weekday Education Director
1986-1987	Ethel Carr	Weekday Education Director
1989	Faye Sweeney	Interim
1987-1989	Sara Ponder	Weekday Education Director
1990	Mary Coble	Interim
1988-1990	Debbie Blake	Weekday Education Director

WEEKDAY EDUCATION MINISTRY (Continued)

1990-1993	Becky Stout	Weekday Education Director
1994	Donna Garrison	Interim
1994-2002	Caron Clark	Weekday Education Director
2002-	Kelly Roney	Weekday Education Director

SUMMER YOUTH ASSOCIATES

1955	Wendell Sloan	Southwestern
1958	Martha Williams	Southwestern
1961	Juanita Swindler	Southwestern
1963	Bob Redwine	Southwestern
1965	Helen Ann Connell	Westminster College
1972	George Eison	Furman University
1973	Harvey Myers	Southeastern
1975	Sally Young	UNCC
1976	Marvin Cameron	Southern Seminary
1977	Marvin Cameron	Southern Seminary
1978	Keithen M. Tucker	Southeastern
1979	Steve Cromer	Southeastern
1980	Keith Sexton	Southeastern
	Jerry Anderson	Mars Hill College
1981	John Gaines	Southern Seminary
	David Cromer	Southeastern
1982	John Gaines	Southern Seminary
	Land Hite	Southeastern
1983	Land Hite	Southeastern
	Mark/Karen Douglas	Southeastern
1984	Fred Salley	Southeastern
1985	Sandi Self	Gardner-Webb College
1986	Ricky Cates	UNC-CH
1987	Julie Hamrick	Southern Seminary
1990	Jim West	Southeastern
1991	Kevin Spencer	UNC-CH
1992	Becky Clabough	Southeastern
1993	Mark Hardin	UNCC
1994	Lee Gray	Southeastern
1995	Katie Porter	Queens College
1997	Lin Carter	Gardner-Webb University
1998	Lin Carter	Gardner-Webb University
1999	Brian Foreman	Duke University
	Debbi Grosch	Richmond Seminary
2002	Kacey Reynolds	Duke University
2003	Kristen Adkins	Duke University

CHURCHES SPONSORED

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CHURCH</u>
1962	Ikogosi Youth Camp Assembly, Nigeria
1965	Carmel Baptist Church
1971	Sharon Baptist Church
1979	Candlewyck Baptist Church
1980	Charlotte Korean Baptist Mission
1986	Trinity Baptist Church, The Hague, Netherlands
1987	Metropolitan Baptist Church, Rochester, New York
1987	Second Korean Mission Church
1989	Lome Seminary Chapel, Togo, Africa
1989	Doers of the Word Fellowship (Black), Charlotte
2000	The Church at Weddington

MISSIONARIES SUPPORTED

<u>NAME(S)</u>	<u>COUNTRY</u>
Bill and Connie Andrews	Chile
Mark and Susan Andrews	Chile
David and Naomi Coward	Indonesia
Gerald and Nancy Gardner	JAARS/South America
Ken and Marti Helms	Spain
Dennis and Janet Kirkley	Indonesia
Rev. John McGee	Nigeria
Dr. John Mullins	Upper Volta, South Africa
Cindy and Eddie Ruble	Europe/Indonesia
Melinda and Michael Staples	India/South Africa

MINISTERS LICENSED/ORDAINED

DATENAME

1963	Rev. Theophilus Patnaik
1969	Rev. Lowell Dotson
1974	Rev. Charles Edwards
1974	Dr. Randall Robinson
1976	Dr. William Henry Crouch, Jr.
1977	Rev. Hal Melton
1977	Rev. Mark Andrews
1977	Rev. Dennis Kirkley
1978	Rev. Marvin Cameron
1978	Rev. Samuel Rutland, III
1979	Rev. Robert T. Smith, Jr.
1979	Rev. Stephen W. Smith
1980	Rev. Gary Kaufman
1980	Rev. Dennis Whitaker
1981	Rev. Patricia McBrayer
1984	Rev. Mike McKee
1984	Rev. Land Hite, Jr.
1985	Rev. David Cromer
1985	Rev. Al Ledford
1985	Dr. Martha Iley
1987	Rev. Sue Deaton
1991	Dr. John Blizzard
1991	Rev. Lee Porter, II
1996	Rev. Luther "Drag" Kimrey
1997	Rev. Donald E. Keeney
2001	Rev. Angela S. Clark
2001	Rev. Debbi Grosch
2003	Rev. Chris Morris

ANNUAL BUDGETS/RECEIPTS

1954	\$ 20,000/\$ 24,368	1979	\$ 630,000 \$ 622,354
1955	\$ 30,000/\$ 44,000	1980	\$ 689,000/\$ 673,416
1956	\$ 60,000/\$ 60,529	1981	\$ 770,000/\$ 780,490
1957	\$ 76,000/\$ 70,356	1982	\$ 900,000/\$ 879,452
1958	\$ 85,000/\$ 83,354	1983	\$1,020,000/\$ 985,329
1959	\$102,000/\$108,000	1984	\$1,077,000/\$1,061,192
1960	\$115,000/\$104,822	1985	\$1,188,000/\$1,191,031
1961	\$133,000/\$111,507	1986	\$1,216,000/\$1,238,962
1962	\$126,000/\$125,870	1987	\$1,398,000/\$1,272,006
1963	\$128,000/\$129,147	1988	\$1,497,600/\$1,467,346
1964	\$144,000 \$145,691	1989	\$1,506,000/\$1,514,000
1965	\$150,000/\$163,606	1990	\$1,522,000/\$1,522,613
1966	\$150,000/\$150,806	1991	\$1,615,000/\$1,608,174
1967	\$160,000/\$166,000	1992	\$1,540,000/\$1,496,891
1968	\$163,000/\$167,700	1993	\$1,600,000/\$1,561,631
1969	\$200,000/\$211,105	1994	\$1,678,601/\$1,728,855
1970	\$250,000/	1995	\$1,929,000/\$1,902,007
1971	\$270,000/	1996	\$2,028,730/\$1,907,333
1972	\$300,000/\$309,844	1997	\$2,143,165 \$2,035,772
1973	\$327,945/\$328,578	1998	\$2,272,634/\$2,150,758
1974	\$382,130/\$354,823	1999	\$2,350,874/\$2,323,643
1975	\$389,300/\$376,174	2000	\$2,500,000/\$2,389,212
1976	\$411,945/\$415,034	2001	\$2,500,000/\$2,381,222
1977	\$450,000/	2002	\$2,500,000/\$2,431,009
1978	\$575,000/\$579,947	2003	\$2,620,000/\$2,539,385
		2004	\$2,720,000/

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

The statistics, in most cases, correspond with the church year which begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CHURCH</u>	<u>SUNDAY SCHOOL</u>	<u>TRAINING UNION</u>	<u>WMU</u>
1953-54	60	None	None	None
1954-55	120	76	None	None
1955-56	290	405	147	129
1956-57	374	484	179	149
1957-58	432	539	177	191
1958-59	525	662	176	
1959-60	651	683	198	
1960-61	688	812	259	

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>CHURCH</u>	<u>SUNDAY SCHOOL</u>	<u>TRAINING UNION</u>	<u>WMU</u>
1961-62	745	872	233	
1962-63	844	937	282	
1963-64	967	1,036	359	
1964-65	1,070	1,123	305	
1965-66	1,041	1,125	217	
1966-67	1,080	1,147	245	
1967-68	1,168	1,234	228	
1968-69	1,327	1,185	233	
1969-70	1,346	1,298	295	
1970-71	1,496	1,327	233	
1971-72	1,595	1,360	225	
1972-73	1,708	1,399	226	
1973-74	1,872	1,318	181	264
1974-75	1,940	1,431	204	306
1975-76	1,983	1,416	211	214
1976-77	2,048	1,462	230	290
1977-78	2,098	1,509	269	468
1978-79	2,116	1,499	127	202
1979-80	2,183	1,610	190	240
1980-81	2,218	1,499	159	243
1981-82	2,061	1,548	126	246
1982-83	2,070	1,640	429	243
1983-84	2,072	1,540		
1984-85	2,166	1,652		
1985-86	2,262	1,671	723	294
1986-87	2,280	1,554	865	314
1987-88	2,361	1,699	781	318
1988-89	2,375	1,691		
1989-90	2,407	1,652		
1990-91	2,515	1,741	369	319
1991-92	2,336	1,674		
1992-93	2,259	1,623		
1993-94	2,338	1,694		
1994-95	2,378	1,716		
1995-96	2,105	1,595		
1996-97	2,078	1,576		
1997-98	2,107	1,590		
1998-99	2,126	1,484		
1999-00	2,041	1,479		
2000-01	2,131	1,453		150
2001-02	2,033	1,457		
2002-03	2,094	1,425		
2003-04	2,121	1,446		100

DEACON CHAIRS

1954-55	Russell E. Tucker	1979-80	Charles E. Stroud
1955-56	Amos S. Bumgardner	1980-81	Rod W. Coward
1956-57	J. Howard Pike	1981-82	Otto Lockee
1957-58	R. E. Hardaway	1982-83	Clarence Adams
1958-59	Al Edwards	1983-84	Bill Caldwell
1959-60	Harry Bacon	1984-85	Jessie Oxendine
1960-61	Russell E. Tucker	1985-86	Frank Litaker
1961-62	Jarvis Warren	1986-87	Wylie Berry
1962-63	Luther J. Maddox	1987-88	Bill Caldwell
1963-64	Luther J. Maddox	1988-89	Ben Rentz
1964-65	Jarvis Warren	1989-90	Clarence Adams
1965-66	David Bodenhamer	1990-91	Hunter Cook
1966-67	Arthur Smith	1991-92	Sam Rutland
1967-68	Herman Kissiah	1992-93	Earl Pope
1968-69	Harry Brown	1993-94	Hunter Cook
1969-70	Bill Eison	1994-95	Bill Caldwell
1970-71	Clifford "Chip" Kissiah	1995-96	Mickey Buford
1971-72	Ed Haire	1996-97	Wylie Berry
1972-73	Bryce Iley	1997-98	Clarence Adams
1973-74	Austin Moody	1998-99	Hunter Cook
1974-75	Sam Rutland	1999-00	David Miller
1975-76	Barton Hodges	2000-01	Curt Farmer
1976-77	Earl Pope	2001-02	Matt Middlebrooks
1977-78	Paul Godfrey	2002-03	Harrison Marshall
1978-79	Aubrey Arant	2003-04	Bill Caldwell

DEACONS EMERITUS

Qualifications to be designated as a Deacon Emeritus: To have served at least ten (10) years on the active board and be 70 years old. A deacon must be nominated by the deacons and voted on by the church. Position was placed in church bylaws on December 12, 1976.

1976	Amos Bumgardner	1986	Harry Brown
1976	Russell E. Tucker	1986	Aubrey Arant
1980	Harry C. Bacon	1990	Barton Hodges
1980	Andrew J. Borders	1992	Sam Rutland
1980	Herman "Chip" Kissiah	1994	Paul Godfrey
1982	Al Edwards	1994	Bryce Iley
1982	Al Welling, Sr.	1998	Rod Coward
1982	Selby Daniels	2003	Ed Haire
1985	Doug Broadway	2003	Jeff Summers
1985	Ramon Sudderth	2004	Clarence Adams

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

1954-55	Robert Smythe	1980-81	Bob Josey
1955-56	Robert Smythe	1981-82	Bob Josey
1956-57	Edward E. Dickinson		Jim Owen
1957-58	Edward E. Dickinson	1982-83	Jim Owen
1958-59	Edward E. Dickinson	1983-84	Jim Owen
1959-60	Edward E. Dickinson	1984-85	Jim Owen
1960-61	Edward E. Dickinson	1985-86	Jim Owen
1961-62	Clifford Kissiah	1986-87	Jim Owen
1962-63	Clifford Kissiah		Wes Rundquist
1963-64	Jack Garrett	1987-88	Wes Rundquist
1964-65	Jack Garrett	1989-90	West Rundquist
1965-66	Clifford Kissiah	1990-91	Charles Northcutt
1966-67	Bryan Coates	1991-92	Wade Stokes
1967-68	Bryan Coates	1992-93	Wade Stokes
1968-69	Bryan Coates	1993-94	Wade Stokes
1969-70	Max Harris	1994-95	Wade Stokes
1970-71	Bill Eison	1995-96	Nancy Golson
1971-72	Bill Eison	1996-97	Nancy Golson
1972-73	Barton Hodges	1997-98	Jerry Harmon
1973-74	Barton Hodges		Sally Higgins
1974-75	William H. Hale	1998-99	Jerry Harmon
1975-76	William H. Hale		Sally Higgins
1976-77	William H. Hale	1999-00	Greg Thompson
1977-78	William H. Hale	2000-01	Greg Thompson
	Earl Pope		David Miller
1978-79	Austin Moody	2001-02	David Miller
1979-80	Austin Moody	2002-03	David Miller
1980-81	Claude Hale	2003-04	David Miller

WMU DIRECTORS

1955-56	Arlene Grimes	1980-81	Carolyn Motsinger
1956-57	Carrie Hollingsworth	1981-82	Carolyn Motsinger
1957-58	Carrie Hollingsworth	1982-83	Carolyn Motsinger
1958-59	Carrie Hollingsworth	1983-84	JoAnne Compton
1959-60	Mrs. R. R. Anderson	1984-85	JoAnne Compton
1960-61	Margie Glover	1985-86	Debra Wallace
1961-62	Margie Glover	1986-87	Debra Wallace
1962-63	Dorothy Smith	1987-88	Debra Wallace
1963-64	Dorothy Smith	1988-89	Debra Wallace
1964-65	Mary Ann Crouch	1989-90	Dorothea Compton
1965-66	Mary Ann Crouch	1990-91	Dorothea Compton
1966-67	Inez Arant	1991-92	Dorothea Compton
1967-68	Mrs. Barton Hodges	1992-93	Marie Irving
1968-69	Mrs. Barton Hodges	1993-94	Marie Irving
1969-70	Mrs. E. L. Garmon	1994-95	Marie Irving
1970-71	Mrs. E. L. Garmon	1995-96	Sally Higgins
1971-72	Mrs. Larry Russell	1996-97	Sally Higgins
1972-73	Mamie Snider	1997-98	Donna Hastings
1973-74	Dorothea Compton	1998-99	Christa Moose
1974-75	Becky Harris	1999-00	Christa Moose
1975-76	Becky Harris	2000-01	Bunnie Walker
1976-77	Jackie Cromer	2001-02	Bunnie Walker
1977-78	Jackie Cromer	2002-03	Debbi Grosch
1978-79	Jackie Cromer	2003-04	Debbi Grosch
1979-80	Carolyn Motsinger		

BROTHERHOOD DIRECTORS

1954-62		1980-81	Jim Seagraves
1962-63	L. B. Mauney	1981-82	Aubrey Arant
1963-64	Luther Maddox	1982-83	Allen Williams
1964-65	Luther Maddox	1983-84	Don Motsinger
1965-66	C. W. Kissiah	1984-85	Chet Goolsby
1966-67	Bryce Iley	1985-97	
1967-68	James Hayes	1997-98	Bill Caldwell
1968-69		1998-99	Bill Caldwell
1969-70	James Hayes	1999-00	Bill Caldwell
1970-73		2000-02	
1973-74	Dick Lovell	2002-03	Duncan Brewer
1974-80		2003-04	

TRAINING DIRECTORS

1954-55	Charles C. Helms	The church voted to end the Training Union Program, effective August 30, 1983. It was replaced with Discipleship Training on Wednesday evenings.	
1955-56	Charles C. Helms		
1956-57	Charles C. Helms		
1957-58	Charles C. Helms		
1958-59	Richard E. Hardaway		
1959-60	Warren Fennell		
	Al Edwards		
1960-61	Al Edwards	1983-84	Joe Taylor
1961-62	Al Edwards	1984-85	Joe Taylor
1962-63	Al Edwards	1985-86	Joe Taylor
1963-64	Al Edwards	1986-87	Gerry Cofer
1964-65	Lewis Sykes	1987-88	JoAnne Compton
1965-66	Jean Hyman	1988-89	JoAnne Compton
1966-67	Jean Hyman	1989-90	
1967-68	Jean Hyman	1990-91	
1968-69	Jean Hyman	1991-92	
1969-70	Harold Eddins	1992-93	
1970-71	Harold Eddins	1993-94	
1971-72	Harold Eddins	1994-95	
1972-73	Harold Eddins	1995-96	
1973-74	Olvis Spencer	1996-97	
1974-75	Mary E. Smith	1997-98	
1975-76	Mary E. Smith	1998-99	
1976-77	Mary E. Smith	1999-00	Richard Landers
1977-78	Mary E. Smith	2000-01	
1978-79	Hannah Waters	2001-02	
1979-80	Hannah Waters	2002-03	
1980-81	Hannah Waters	2003-04	
1981-82	Hannah Waters		
1982-83	Mike Wilson		

IN MEMORIAM

1954

Mrs. B. B. McMahon

1957

Mrs. A. F. Welling, Sr.

1959

Mrs. C. H. Beachum
 Rebecca Jane Byrum
 Susan Jordan
 Harry A. Tibbs

1960

Charles E. Petty

1961

Mrs. T. L. Finger
 Annyce Helms
 Pamela Anne Oxendine

1963

H. C. Alexander
 E. B. Vosburgh, Sr.

1964

Mrs. H. C. Alexander
 Mrs. Hollis Baxter
 Fred P. Culbreth
 H. G. Garrison, Sr.
 R. S. Winstead

1965

Mrs. Wren Freeman

1966

H. W. Cessna
 Mrs. Marguerite Long
 Mrs. Larry Smith

1967

Mrs. Wendell L. Wilmoth

1968

Rev. Posey Downs, Sr.
 Robert L. Hyman
 John P. Lewis

1969

Francis Chambers
 Mrs. Jennie Fitzgerald
 Roy E. Hallman
 George O'Hara
 Merle Payseur

1970

Carl B. Pressler
 Jack B. Upton, Sr.

1972

Stephen Dale Brown
 Mrs. Charles Floyd
 Thomas Gambrell
 Rev. R. M. Hagler
 Mrs. Lloyd Massey
 Mrs. Marvin R. Rea
 Kenny Schnakenburg

1973

Mrs. Mae H. Allison
 Billy Craig

1974

Mrs. Ruth Borders
 R. C. Britt
 Mrs. Betty Davis
 Mrs. Lillian Esleeck
 Mrs. Bruce Funderburk
 Paul N. Gardner
 Norman Kennedy

1975

Terry Dalrymple
 Mrs. Grace Tillotson
 Harney Turner

IN MEMORIAM

(Continued)

1976

Glen Fleming
 R. K. Helms
 Herbert Hutto
 E. P. Hyman
 Lawrence Martin
 Dr. E. D. Moore
 Ellen B. Robinson
 Sarah Lou Wood

1977

A. P. Gash
 Geraldine Hill
 John Hord
 Randy Moore

1978

Herbert Browne
 John David
 Donald Jeffries
 Samuel Perry

1979

Dr. Amos Bumgardner
 W. T. Ritch
 Mrs. Juanita Rogers
 Arthur R. Ross
 Mrs. Pauline Sherrill

1980

Lawrence Corne
 Bruce Funderburk
 Shelly Greenwood
 Ben Brickhouse
 Bessie Williams
 Ruby Johnson

1981

Ross Meredith
 Alice Mauldin
 Hallie Harrison

1981 (continued)

Rachel Felts
 D. A. Moss

1982

Chester Coley
 William E. Craig
 Bill Hardage
 Leon Williams
 Georgiana Wilson
 Eva Templeton
 Bill Burnette
 Meredith Payne
 Bea Cagle
 Herdy Smith
 Bruce Godfrey
 Mrs. Keith DeNeui
 Ruth Hord
 Jean Govern

1983

Ed Bennett
 Louise Beam
 Charles T. Myers
 Clyde Teague
 Boyd (George) Houck
 Russell E. Tucker
 Harry F. Moate
 Joseph H. Sapp, Jr.

1984

Mildred Bennett
 Rev. James F. Graham
 Lynwood T. Martin
 James H. Mundy
 Essie Culbreth
 Ben Hooker
 Gladys Carr
 Geneva Terwilliger

IN MEMORIAM

(Continued)

1985

Minnie Jones
 Robert Grubb
 Gerald R. Henseley
 James E. Dorsey
 Lloyd Massey
 Louise Alley
 Lewis Jenkins

1986

Grady Kirby
 Roxie Dorsey
 Fred H. Poston
 Mae Hamrick
 Mary Cutrell
 Edward R. Echerd, Jr.
 Elmer Rawson
 John Q. Burnette

1987

Thelma Proffitt
 Stella Richardson
 Arthur Nebel
 Virginia Turner
 J. R. Carr
 Arlene Grimes
 James Greene
 Olin Richardson

1988

Ida Ross
 Ida Charlton
 Walter Bragg
 Mrs. Ara Monahan
 Stephen L. Hooks
 Mary Houck
 Vearl Kissiah
 Luby Sherrill
 Odell Townsend
 Doug Broadway
 R. B. Walker

1988 (continued)

Audrey Walker
 Edith Vogt
 Joel Edwards

1989

Joseph F. Woodward, Jr.
 Mary K. Woodward
 Michael Isham
 Clara Mason
 Hazeline Pressley
 Stacey Henseley
 Donna Gillespie
 Mae Rhyne
 Jimmy McLamb
 Mildred Lynn
 Beulah Belk
 Margaret Vowell
 Howard I. Grimes
 Tom Colee

1990

Bobbie Britt
 Dr. W. Perry Crouch
 Mary Perry
 Barton W. Hodges
 Ralph Wilson
 Amalie Gantt
 Pearl Smith
 Ethel Turner
 Doris Baker
 Joel Cagle
 Sarah Royals
 Curtis Kizziah
 Margaret McRacken
 Norman L. Gardiner

1991

Nita Kirby
 Evelyn P. Fleming
 Ann Carson
 Aubrey Parks, Jr.

IN MEMORIAM

(Continued)

1991 (continued)

Louise C. Browne
 Patricia Ledford
 Wren Freeman
 Lois G. Abernethy
 Brenda McIntosh
 Henry S. Martin
 Dorothy Claytor
 Lillian Welling

1992

George Claytor
 Harvey West
 Charles W. Wray
 Frank K. Springstead
 Beatrice Smith
 John A. Barrett, Jr.
 Jennifer Compton

1993

Carol F. McSpadden
 Mary Cloninger
 Dr. David Moore
 Ramon C. Sudderth
 John D. Moody
 Jessie F. Williams
 Rosalie P. Wood
 John W. Wampler
 W. E. "Buck" Holland
 Ashlyn Renee Carpenter
 Phyllis R. Clabough
 Carolyn Strowd
 Exitia Morgan

1994

Geraldine M. Moore
 Beverly F. Kaufman
 Michael A. Cullen
 Tim Hord
 Aurora Rotar
 Adgie Rogers
 Gerald "Jake" Jacobs

1994 (continued)

Ralph N. Farmer
 John F. Johnson
 Mary Lou Phillips

1995

Edward Bennick
 Ike Smith
 Charles W. Still
 J. C. "Jake" Goodman
 Leighton H. Moore
 Sam Cook, Jr.
 Edith Dalton
 Hanson Dunbar
 H. Frank Hilton
 Robert D. Kirby
 Sue Smith
 Signora Bennick
 Rupert Sykes
 Karen Eury
 Edwin Riggsbee
 Andrew J. Borders

1996

Mildred Eury
 Paul Hildreth
 Jack Walker
 H. Wesley Simpson
 Jackie Ramsey
 Rose Tucker
 Donna Pfaff

1997

Roy E. Strowd
 Henry Keziah
 Jack W. Little
 Annie Downs
 Jane Anderson
 Dailey Pratt
 Connie Funderburk
 Ted Harris
 Jean Myers

IN MEMORIAM

(Continued)

1997 (continued)

Edna Bobo
 Lucille Vinton
 Cuba Heilman
 Ruth Lee
 Ted Harris

1998

Catherine Rimmer
 Lillian Brown
 Grace Meredith
 Carrie Buxton
 Ed Terrell
 Bill Barksdale, Jr.
 Rev. Ruth Thompson
 Sarah Smith
 John Deere
 Margaret E. Springer
 Shelby Mitchell
 Marie Guthrie
 John L. Bethea, Jr.
 John W. Banks
 Troy Corne
 Gilbert Noland
 Rev. Gordon Weekley, Jr.
 George C. Hedden
 Christine Doyle

1999

Robert C. Hartsell
 Eric D. Brown
 Ralph Clark
 Joyce Hackney
 Valerie LeQuire
 Jim Bridgeman
 Frances S. Elliott
 Irvin Robbins
 James Kirkley
 Eva Marie Sanders
 Richard Stoker

2000

Lillian Hahn
 Walter G. Terwilleger
 Marie Hardage
 Marlene Wilson
 Ruby Craig
 Evelyn Helms
 Allie Burnette
 Nina Godfrey
 Bea Broadway
 Sharon Lynn Lob
 Ronald W. Allen, Sr.
 Matthew Carpenter
 Glenn L. Hipps, Sr.

2001

Harry C. Bacon
 Betty Miller
 H. E. "Ted" Cunningham
 Spencer L. Hege
 Thomas R. Marx
 Marjorie T. Borders
 Harry V. Todd
 Leigh Austin
 Ella Tidwell
 Larry Rogers
 Pao-Lien Wang
 Evelyn Mundy
 Notre Upton
 Al Welling, Sr.
 Dempsey Russell
 Margaret Hilton
 Carlotta Tuttle
 Jim Lay
 Frank Litaker
 Ray Dees
 Ethel Farmer
 Michelle O. Banks
 Richard Beck

IN MEMORIAM

(Continued)

2002

Harry Moss
Becky Payne
Jane Russell
Margaret Glover
Warren Mallard
Eugene Proffitt
Jerry Jackson
Peggy Terrell
John Spears
Wilson Godfrey
Woody Player
Clifford "Chip" Kissiah
Jeff R. Summers, Jr.

2003

Roger Vinton, Sr.
Buddy McNeill
Hazel Jones
Ralph "Buddy" Long, Jr.
Juanita Alford
Becky Peeler
Irene Martin
Marjorie Parker
Pauline Willard
Guilford Vogt, Jr.
Marion Bacon
Betty Gilreath
Mary Anna Keene
Courtney Leigh Ballard
Carrie McSpadden
Hazel Bumgarner
Polly Williams

INDEX

A

- Acevedo, Carleen 369
 Adams, Bonnie 121, 134, 198, 211, 234, 305, 336, 407, 442
 Adams, Clarence 123, 132, 268, 270, 276, 284, 300, 303, 316, 374, 380, 447
 Adams, Meredith 364
 Addenbrook, Bill 90
 Adkins, Kristen 440, 442
 Alexander, Carol 98
 Alexander, John 308
 Allen, Carole 430
 Allen, Sam 404
 Anderson, Glenn 11
 Anderson, Jerry 164, 168, 169
 Andrews, Cathy Kale 100
 Andrews, Connie 60, 66, 86, 100, 112, 130, 144, 163, 164, 165, 172, 192, 198, 204, 229, 249, 253, 289, 311, 317, 328, 329, 349, 430
 Andrews, E. C. 67
 Andrews, Jay 60, 73
 Andrews, Rev. Mark W. 161, 165, 172, 180, 204, 260, 317, 322, 350
 Andrews, Martha 112
 Andrews, Susan 161, 165, 172, 204, 260, 350
 Andrews, Rev. William P. (Bill) 60, 65, 66, 68, 73, 86, 90, 95, 100, 101, 104, 112, 118, 128, 129, 130, 131, 139, 143, 144, 146, 154, 163, 164, 165, 172, 192, 194, 204, 222, 245, 249, 253, 254, 258, 259, 267, 272, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 304, 307, 317, 328, 329, 355, 357, 363
 Andrews, Jr., William (Bill) 100
 Annie Armstrong Offering 66, 75, 84, 106, 119, 125, 136, 142, 159, 171, 181, 187, 196, 232, 248, 261, 277, 306, 313, 324, 349, 382, 407
 Apple, Karen 109
 Arant, Aubrey 55, 86, 226, 237, 267, 327, 338, 350, 359, 367, 401, 411, 432
 Arant, David 97, 161, 303
 Arant, Inez 234, 344, 432
 Armes, Mrs. Vernice W. 130
 Ashe, Trip 185
 Austin, Jeff 364
 Ayers, Rev. Steve 223

B

- Bacon, Harry 20, 160, 223
 Bailey, Carl 180
 Bailey, Rev. Richard 408
 Bailey, Talmadge 150
 Baker, Tom 175, 186, 197, 203, 213, 214, 215, 227, 233, 270
 Ballard, Courtney Leigh 447
 Ballard, Debbie 361, 447
 Ballard, Randy 360, 361, 363, 369, 379, 399, 409, 413, 440, 447
 Baptist Metrolina Ministries 99, 101, 112, 113, 114, 118, 144, 273, 331, 408
 Barnett, Kenneth 305, 342, 369, 443, 445

INDEX

- Barrett, Ruth 76
 Bartol, Ashley and Hedgie 428
 Barton, Debra 160, 167
 Baxter, Hollis 58
 Bayless, Celia 105
 Bayless, Rev. Ron 105, 106, 109, 113, 121, 124, 126, 127, 143
 Beaman, Christine 234, 270, 355
 Beaver, Mr. and Mrs. E. M. 173
 Beeson, Martha 65
 Bennight, Buddy 342, 366
 Bennight, Nancy 355, 366
 Benton, Jim 5
 Berry, Barbara 397, 421
 Berry, Wylie 224, 268, 270, 371
 Bertini, Anne 259, 312, 446
 Bethea, John 225, 292, 330, 350, 387, 408
 Bethea, Keith 330, 408
 Bethea, Pauline 330, 350, 408, 430
 Better Homes Club 87, 101, 102, 105, 109, 110, 111, 168, 186, 201, 202, 218, 224, 282,
 287, 305, 313, 315, 324, 332, 334, 336, 345
 Bigby, Luther 344, 353
 Blake, Debbie 297
 Blankenship, Bill 180, 186
 Blankenship, Mercer 58
 Blanton, Rev. Joe 270
 Blizzard, Dr. John 267, 268, 277, 283, 292, 294, 361, 363
 Blizzard, Luci 294
 Bodenhamer, David 40, 67
 Bolanos, Rev. Eladio 53
 Borders, Andrew J. 28, 160, 223
 Bostic, Ron 361
 Boulos, Maha 307
 Brannon, Jennifer 331
 Brant, Polly 233
 Bridges, H. Conrad 80, 87
 Broadway, Doug 223, 251
 Brooks, Carl 224
 Brooks, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. 235
 Brooks, Jeff 235
 Brooks, Patsy 142
 Brooks, Ruby 42
 Brooks, Suzanne 235
 Brotherhood 35, 37, 42, 46, 53, 62, 66, 107, 108, 109, 169, 260
 Brown, Audrey 401
 Brown, Harry 65, 72, 223
 Brown, Pansy 97
 Brown, Pat 298
 Brown, Peggy 140

INDEX

- Bruch, Duane 43
 Bryson, R. C. 132, 166
 Bucher, Dennis 148
 Buford, Mickey 352
 Bugg, Dr. Charles B. (Chuck) 304, 319, 320, 322, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 344, 346, 347, 348, 350, 351, 352, 354, 355, 360, 376, 382, 387, 390
 Bugg, Diane 319, 326, 353
 Bullard, Dr. George 269, 271, 272, 275, 276, 277, 288, 289
 Bullard, Jr., George W. 164, 173
 Bumgardner, Dr. Amos S. 3, 32, 34, 41, 60, 61, 83, 88, 97, 122, 131, 146, 154, 160, 162
 Bumgardner, Dr. L. Franklin 2, 3, 88
 Bumgardner, Mrs. L. F. 2
 Bumgarner, Wade and Hazel 416
 Bunker, Steve 148
 Burd, John 353, 436, 441
 Burke, Mrs. Clyde (Norma Jean) 72, 76, 80, 95, 104, 116, 119
 Burke, Marvin 179
 Burnett, Iris 161
 Burnette, Allie 140, 241
 Burnette, Beth 118
 Burnette, Dr. John Q. 187, 241
 Burris, Linda 278, 293, 298, 312, 322, 355
 Butler, Rev. Bobby 226, 229, 234, 244, 245, 256, 259, 283, 286, 312, 343, 345, 355, 356, 360
 Byron, Beth 311
 Byrum, Cindy 43, 47, 73
 Byrum, Howard M. 3

C

- Caddell, Mark 97
 Cadenhead, Rev. Chris 373, 374, 381, 390
 Cadenhead, Melody 373, 374
 Cadenhead, Jr., Dr. Roy Alton (Al) 372, 373, 374, 375, 377, 378, 380, 381, 382, 384, 385, 386, 387, 390, 394, 397, 398, 399, 400, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 411, 412, 413, 416, 417, 420, 421, 422, 423, 425, 426, 427, 428, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 445, 446, 449
 Cadenhead, Suzanne 373, 374, 402
 Caldwell, Bill 192, 224, 251, 268, 270, 276, 327, 333, 337, 338, 343
 Caldwell, Mrs. D. H. 32
 Cadlwell, Ruth 320
 Caldwell, Will 194, 197, 277
 Cameron, Marvin 126, 127, 129, 130, 134, 158
 Carnes, Lisa 189
 Carpenter, Connie 441, 442
 Carpenter, David 342, 343
 Carpenter, Matthew 441, 442

INDEX

- Carpenter, Sid 441, 442
 Carr, Ethel 221, 226, 237, 238
 Carroll, Larry 201
 Carter, Debbie 267, 291
 Carter, Jennifer 283, 287
 Carter, Rev. Lin 365, 367, 372, 385, 409, 410, 415, 448
 Carter, Tonya 365
 Casey, Dr. Jay 294, 295, 296, 297, 300, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312, 315, 316, 318, 319, 321, 322, 323, 324, 326, 328, 329, 333, 334, 338, 339, 340, 342, 346, 347, 348, 354, 357, 359, 360, 361
 Casey, Vicki 311, 356
 Cash, Pam 308
 Cates, Ricky 219, 222, 228
 Cessna, Mrs. Bill 40
 Chapman, Ed 224
 Chapman, Louise 140
 Charles-Craft, Rev. Ann 280, 287, 296, 302, 307, 309, 312, 314, 317, 322
 Chastain, Avonelle 234, 246
 Clabough, Becky 308
 Clardy, Rip 283
 Clark, Rev. Angela 325, 326, 328, 341, 364, 367, 405, 410, 411
 Clark, Caron C. 328, 331, 343, 357, 368, 418, 421, 423, 434, 436
 Clark, Rev. Deborah 402
 Clark, Melinda 367
 Clements, Keith 60
 Clemmons, Rashaan 320
 Coates, Bryan 62, 72, 76, 80, 95, 115, 119
 Coates, Mrs. Bryan 72
 Coates, Elaine 118
 Cobb, Dr. Louis 287
 Cobb, Nancy 350
 Cobble, Janis 447
 Coble, Mary Jacque 280
 Cofer, Gerry 184, 195, 198, 201, 212, 223, 225
 Colbert, Henry 181
 Cole, Paula 148
 Colee, Mr. and Mrs. N. S. 128
 Compton, Dorothea 129, 196, 220, 234, 249, 287, 300, 442
 Compton, Dr. and Mrs. Dudley 159
 Compton, Eva 159
 Compton, Jennifer 328
 Compton, Joanne 201
 Connell, Helen Ann 43, 44, 46, 47, 52
 Connery, Elizabeth 41, 43
 Cook, Carter 248, 308
 Cook, Hunter 259, 339, 355, 357, 363, 385, 401, 407
 Cook, Janis 357, 364, 401, 407
 Cook, Stephen 326, 354, 368, 390, 407

INDEX

- Coppage, Nancy 140
 Corne, Margaret 419
 Cornell, Ted 103
 Coward, David 162, 196, 204, 220, 253, 320, 322
 Coward, Eva 196, 234, 287, 320
 Coward, Naomi 204, 220, 253, 321
 Coward, Rod 196, 212, 223, 225, 234, 250, 255, 268, 270, 271, 283, 290, 303, 306, 320, 331, 372
 Cox, Mrs. William 41
 Craig, Billy 108
 Craig, Dr. and Mrs. Joe 144, 152, 161, 167, 184
 Craig, Margaret 161
 Craig, Rev. Stan 200, 204
 Crawford, Jim 134
 Crawford, Dr. John 228
 Crawley, Bill 67
 Crawley, Mrs. William 60, 61
 Crews, Mrs. T. H. 15
 Cromer, Mr. and Mrs. B. C. 205, 307, 343
 Cromer, David 126, 146, 155, 167, 176, 180, 182, 205, 307, 308, 355
 Cromer, Jackie 142, 181, 257, 287, 303, 307, 343
 Cromer, Jeff 148
 Cromer, Rev. Steve 155, 296, 304
 Crosby, Jerry 224
 Crouch, Jr., Rev. Bill 70, 105, 116, 118, 125, 130, 150, 155, 161, 185, 191, 203, 204, 215, 218, 220, 245, 272, 294, 310
 Crouch, Debbie 70, 222, 229, 446
 Crouch, George 213, 217, 221, 227, 233, 237, 260, 270, 289, 306, 314, 329, 344, 387, 412, 427, 438, 419
 Crouch, Jan 70, 71, 75, 79, 88, 116, 120, 123, 126, 135, 149, 150, 175, 177, 191, 194, 202, 204, 224, 265, 266, 296, 300, 302, 310, 315, 446
 Crouch, Lynne 150
 Crouch, Mary Ann 53, 66, 152, 192, 196, 213, 217, 221, 227, 231, 233, 237, 270, 282, 289, 306, 311, 314, 344, 357, 449
 Crouch, Sarah 71, 174
 Crouch, Rev. William (Henry) 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 81, 84, 86, 88, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 105, 106, 107, 108, 112, 114, 115, 117, 119, 120, 121, 123, 124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 140, 144, 145, 147, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 159, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 269, 271, 272, 273, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 286, 289, 290, 292, 293, 294, 296, 297, 298, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 311, 316, 318, 320, 327, 328, 330, 334, 338, 339, 352, 353, 355, 361, 383, 391, 443

INDEX

Crouch, Dr. W. Perry 69, 73, 75, 78, 81, 102, 107, 118, 120, 126, 128, 131, 140, 150, 177, 180, 184, 186, 191, 194, 195, 201, 215, 264
 Crouch, Mrs. W. Perry (Kitty) 70, 180, 181, 183, 191, 194, 195, 250, 251, 287, 337, 354, 371, 378
 Crutchfield, Jane 268
 Crye, Caryn 364
 Curry, Michael 233

D

Daniels, Debbie 232
 Daniels, Selby 69, 109, 194, 198
 David, Linda 59
 Davidson, Susan 83, 88
 Dean, Tara and Phillip 292
 Deaton, Rev. Sue 224, 225, 226, 236, 237, 238, 239, 242, 251, 255, 257, 258, 259, 261, 266, 268, 272
 Dees, Mary 434
 DeLaddy, Betsy 314, 320, 333
 DeLaddy, Carol 434
 Dickison, Angie 207
 Dorsey, J. E. 186, 246, 269
 Dorsey, Roxy 246, 269
 Dotson, Chip 198, 236
 Dotson, Rev. Lowell 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 93, 95, 97, 99, 103, 107, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120, 121, 123, 124, 126, 128, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 143, 145, 147, 148, 151, 154, 163, 164, 171, 173, 174, 175, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 185, 186, 188, 189, 190, 193, 194, 196, 198, 199, 201, 203, 204, 207, 210, 212, 213, 215, 218, 221, 222, 224, 227, 230, 236, 237, 244, 339
 Dotson, Sallie 175, 221
 Dotson, Suzanne 236
 Douglas, Mark and Karen 189, 190
 Doyle, Christine 76, 380
 Dunbar, Hanson 235
 Duncan, Bob 95, 119
 Dunn, Maxine 80, 107, 172, 199, 250, 293, 307, 314, 374, 423
 Dunn, Wayne 152

E

Eastover Elementary School 3, 5, 8
 Echerd, Jr., Rev. Ed R. 3, 4, 5, 40, 44, 45, 79, 81, 84, 224
 Eddins, Harold 327, 355, 397
 Edwards, Al 16, 37, 223
 Edwards, Charles (Chuck) 103, 116, 177
 Edwards, Karen 333
 Edwards, Mattie Lou 209, 282
 Edwards, R. Knox 40
 Edwards, Rick 225, 235, 289, 327, 357

INDEX

Edwards, W. M. (Bill) 3, 16
 Eison, Bill 84, 89, 98
 Eison, Mrs. Bill 89
 Eison, George 59, 98, 134
 Ellis, Charlotte 234
 Ellis, Jack 234
 England, Ken 366

F

Fairley, Bill 342
 Fairley, Dalinda 355, 440
 Farmer, Curt 396
 Fesperman, Joe 220
 Fisher, Edna Mae 180, 243, 261, 277, 279, 280, 436, 439
 Fisher, Ken 192, 224, 279, 436
 Flanagan, Candace 334
 Fletcher, Dr. David 42
 Ford, Dr. Leighton 34, 49, 92, 95, 186, 188
 Foreman, Rev. Brian K. 425, 438, 440, 443, 447
 Founders Day 6
 Fowler, Louise (Lu) 66, 91, 344, 376, 424, 425
 Frauenhofer, Elaine 340
 Freeland, Mike 192
 Fulford, Jeannie 108, 109
 Fuller, Bill 104

G

Gaffney, Buddy 80
 Gaines, John 174, 175, 176, 180, 181, 183
 Gardner, Gerald Ray 59, 93, 94, 96, 101, 124, 131
 Gardner, Mrs. Gerald 98, 101
 Garrett, Debbie 343
 Garrett, Jack, 33, 305
 Garrett, Jim 333
 Garrison, Donna 324, 326
 Garrison, Sr., H. G. 5
 Gaskin, Dee 399
 Gaskin, Dolores 344
 Gaskin, Jeff 239, 293
 Gaskin, Dr. John 344, 399, 427
 Gaskin, Marie 239, 293
 Gehring, Phillip 15, 16
 George, Edd 58
 Gibson, Doris M. 26, 28, 29, 57
 Gibson, Floyd 159
 Gill, Mrs. R. M. 3
 Gillespie, Bob 150, 342

INDEX

Gillespie, Diana 342
 Gilliland, Dr. Martha 33, 34
 Gilliland, Rev. W. M. 30, 33, 35
 Gilreath, Betty 213, 225, 228, 347, 443
 Gilreath, Frank 213, 228, 347, 350, 443
 Goad, Steve 355, 394, 401, 411, 427
 Godfrey, Becky 317
 Godfrey-Hatfield, Menda Sue 183
 Godfrey, Paul 60, 66, 205, 317, 326
 Godfrey, Wilson 436
 Golson, Nancy 364
 Goolsby, Wilson 246
 Gosnell, Anna Perry 389
 Graham, Regina M. 282
 Graham, Rev. James and Eunice 154, 155, 286
 Grant, Gary 168, 179, 185, 314, 343
 Gray, Buck 375
 Gray, Lee 328, 375
 Gray, Libby 375
 Gregory, Marty 332, 333, 338, 343, 344
 Griffin, Betty 342
 Griffin, Bill 342, 366, 371
 Griffin, Deborah 278
 Griffin, M. Clyde 3
 Grimes, Mrs. Arlene 246
 Grimes, Margot 11
 Grosch, Anne 418, 419
 Grosch, Debbi 332, 336, 338, 347, 434, 442, 444
 Grosch, Kirk 118
 Gullick, Cleo 85, 220, 303
 Guthrie, Marie 110

H

Hagler, Rev. Reece M. 24, 44, 49, 79, 103
 Haigler, Martha 400
 Haire, Ed 78, 81, 84, 85, 122, 149, 159, 255, 276, 290, 416
 Haire, Maxie 415
 Haire, Skipper 115, 126
 Hales, Lynn 313, 314, 324
 Hall, Dianne 190, 200
 Hall, Ken 350
 Hall, Lorene 434
 Hall, Pat 59
 Hall, Rev. Tommy 190, 200, 204, 212, 215, 219, 221, 222, 228, 232, 236, 238, 245, 248,
 250, 253, 254, 255, 258, 262, 264, 272, 275, 277, 279, 282, 283, 288, 289, 293, 294,
 353
 Halliburton, Marti 413

INDEX

- Hamilton, Chip 106, 125
 Hamilton, IV, George 106, 114, 120, 122, 148, 182, 185, 199, 209, 214, 179, 339
 Hamrick, Julie 235, 238, 245
 Haney, Rev. Doug 337, 340, 341, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 352, 355, 357, 358, 363, 364,
 366, 369, 372, 373, 375, 377, 379, 380, 387, 389, 390, 401, 402, 404, 406, 408, 410,
 413, 423, 425, 428, 430, 431, 435, 439, 442
 Haney, Lori 337, 430
 Harden, Harry 382, 413
 Hardin, Mark 316, 322
 Hardy, Tina 307
 Harris, Jr., Max 76, 115
 Harrison, Mary 329
 Harston, Jana 303, 340
 Hastings, Donna 374
 Hatfield, Daniel E. 253, 317
 Hatfield, Menda Sue 253
 Hayes, Bill 68
 Hayes, Jim 67, 87, 90
 Hayes, Jonathan R. 416
 Hayes, Linda 416
 Hayes, Richard 416
 Heatherly, Geneal 80, 88, 101
 Heavner, Peg 309, 314, 421, 437
 Helms, Barbara 126
 Helms, Brenda 336
 Helms, Mrs. C. C. 29
 Helms, Joe 336
 Helms, Rev. Ken 176, 179, 200, 204, 252, 253, 259
 Helms, Martha 180
 Helms, Marti 200, 204, 252, 253
 Helton, Jerry 110, 136
 Hendricks, Leroy 115, 117, 124
 Henry, Teresa 338
 Hensley, Gloria 201
 Hewett, Penny 309, 318, 325, 343, 345, 359, 418
 Hicks, Pam 343
 Higdon, Bobby 363
 Higdon, Corinne 362, 269
 Higgins, Sally 348, 362, 365
 Hill, Mrs. Don 72
 Hilton, Margaret 109, 177, 182, 400
 Hinrichs, Evelyn 145
 Hite, Land 183, 185, 189, 190, 202, 204
 Hodde, Richard 135
 Hodges, Bart 123, 159, 276
 Hodges, Carol 93
 Hodges, Hatten 237
 Hoffman, Gearlene 143

INDEX

Hoffman, Rev. Steve 128, 129, 143, 152, 162, 164, 168, 171, 174, 175, 180
 Holland, Sandy 394
 Holmes, Alex 103, 115
 Holshouser, Sam 179
 Hooks, Jeffery L. 313, 416
 Horton, Mrs. Leslie J. 26
 Howie, Max 338
 Hudnall, Roy and Lukin 177
 Hull, Jane Shannon 161
 Hunsucker, Kathy 325, 368
 Hunt, Alma 166
 Hunter, Kendall 364
 Hut, The 2, 3, 5, 89, 99
 Hyman, Mrs. Ned (Jeanne) 50, 59, 72

I

Iley, Bryce 66, 78, 208, 303
 Iley, Cheryl 115
 Iley, Debbie 76, 135
 Iley, Dr. Martha 9, 16, 34, 38, 62, 72, 74, 91, 94, 104, 114, 143, 208, 225, 228, 269, 284, 297, 330, 402, 413
 Ingersoll, Jo-Ann 438
 Irving, Bob 311
 Irving, Marie 313, 326
 Izard, Anne 192

J

Johnson, Bill 272
 Johnson, Jerry M. 290, 292
 Johnson, Ken 86, 117
 Johnson, Tucker 162
 Johnstone, Karen 167
 Jones, Robert (Bobby) 40, 69, 85, 103, 114, 134, 173, 238
 Jones, Mrs. Robert 40
 Jones, Susan 201
 Jordan, Dr. David 429, 430, 432, 433, 438, 441, 443, 449
 Jordan, Elizabeth 430
 Jordan, Tim 52
 Josey, Bob 162, 167
 Josey, Lee 162, 167
 Jowett, David 143
 Jowett, Marty 143
 Justus, Rev. Tommy 278, 279, 282, 288, 292, 294, 299, 305, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 316, 327, 332, 333, 341, 342, 343, 347

K

- Kaufman, Beverly 115, 233
 Kaufman, Rev. Bill 64
 Kaufman, Dale 45, 108
 Kaufman, Rev. Dean 44, 45, 46, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 63, 65, 70, 73, 78, 81, 84, 86, 88, 89, 92, 99, 100, 101, 108, 111, 151, 163, 169, 261, 264, 273
 Kaufman, Dorothy 45, 52, 72, 86, 89, 101, 261
 Kaufman, Rev. Gary 45, 108, 115, 146, 161, 163, 176, 180, 228, 233
 Kaufman, Melissa 108
 Kaufman, Norman 45
 Keeney, Donald Earle 364
 Keeney, Rachel 364
 Keesler, Elaine 92
 Kelly, Fred 290
 Kelly, Lisa 375
 Ketchum, Inc. 59, 60, 61, 98
 Keziah, Henry and Sue 241
 Kimrey, Carolyn 315, 390
 Kimrey, Drag 270, 285, 290, 300, 311, 315, 318, 354, 390
 Kirkley, Dennis 57, 61, 130, 131, 149, 155, 161, 173, 176, 180, 204, 205, 257, 259, 260, 273
 Kirkley, Jacque and Jim 257
 Kirkley, Janet 130, 161, 173, 176, 204, 206, 257, 260, 262, 311
 Kissiah, Alice 47, 59
 Kissiah, Clifford (Chip) 89, 223, 234, 260, 264, 283, 290, 429
 Kissiah, Herman 66, 69, 92, 161
 Kissiah, Laura 26, 43, 77
 Kizziah, Curtis 110
 Knebusch, Bunny 368, 377
 Knight, Jeanne 343
 Knott, Ben 121, 159
 Kramer, Mrs. Phyllis 86
 Kulik, Mrs. Roye Lynn 88, 93, 97, 98, 107, 110, 128, 133, 142

L

- Lail, Cynthia 270
 Lail, Kenneth 29, 38, 134
 Lail, Randy 148, 269
 Lambert, Derma 229, 233
 Landers, Michelle 306
 Landers, Richard 306, 308, 328, 339, 340, 382
 Landrus, Rev. Edward E. 128, 129, 152, 164, 166, 174, 175, 191, 211, 212, 215, 343
 Landrus, Margaret 185
 Leath, Albert 368
 Ledford, Rev. Al 133, 155, 228, 326
 Ledford, Bill 228
 Ledford, Chris 326
 Ledford, Patricia 86, 228
 Leger, Doreen 233

INDEX

Lemelin, Sylvia 119
 Lennon, Harriet 349, 415
 Lennon, Rev. Judson 20, 66, 68, 81, 102, 104
 Lennon, Mrs. Judson 66, 68, 75
 Lentz, Nancy 184, 185, 186, 189
 Lentz, Jr., Rev. Robert L. (Bob) 184, 186, 188
 Leonard, Dr. Bill 356, 357, 364, 365, 382, 397, 405
 Leonard, Carolyn 42, 327, 336
 Leroy, Lori 278, 293
 Litaker, Anne 366
 Litaker, Frank 268, 270, 366, 414
 Little, Mrs. Jack 33
 Littleton, Jean 117
 Littleton, Renee 115, 168
 Littleton, W. R. 92
 Lockee, Chris 191, 200
 Lockee, Otto 162
 Lockamy, Rev. Eddie 242, 246, 248, 249, 251, 254, 256, 258, 259, 261, 264, 268
 Lockamy, Faye 242, 246, 249, 254
 Long, Mrs. Judy 96, 101, 107
 Long, Pat 344, 347, 354, 355, 357, 358, 366, 368, 369, 377, 380, 390, 402, 404, 406, 408, 414, 422, 423, 431, 435
 Lottie Moon Offering 34, 40, 48, 54, 62, 65, 72, 80, 88, 94, 103, 110, 123, 130, 145, 154, 165, 168, 172, 179, 180, 185, 186, 193, 203, 214, 227, 243, 258, 270, 271, 287, 298, 303, 311, 321, 419
 Lovell, Joan 140
 Lowrance, Martha 25

M

Maddox, Dr. Robert 136
 Mallard, Rev. Warren 260
 Mancuso, Lea Ann 307
 Marks, Rev. Frank 363, 394
 Marren, Florine 80
 Martin, Ashley 320
 Martin, Darlene 142, 167, 369, 416
 Martin, Dianne 362
 Martin, Rev. Jim 362, 363, 364, 367, 368, 369, 370, 377, 399, 400, 403, 404, 405, 419, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 429, 432, 435, 438, 442, 443, 445, 447, 448
 Massey, Lloyd 246
 Massey, Mildred 104, 246, 419
 Mathis, Phillippa 342
 Matthews, Mrs. Brenda 79
 Mayzik, Gordon 297, 309
 McBrayer, Rev. Patricia Lynn (Patty) 147, 153, 154, 161, 163, 168, 171, 172, 174, 175, 178, 179, 185, 188, 193, 196, 197, 199, 204, 206, 207, 213, 215, 218, 222, 227, 232, 233, 234, 236, 237, 240, 243, 244, 314

INDEX

- McCall, Dr. and Mrs. Bill 270, 273
 McCarty, Karen 66, 67
 McCollum, Marc 326
 McCulloch, John 147
 McDonald, Ashley 313
 McDonald, Connie 201, 212, 223, 249
 McDonald, Rev. Lehman (Lee) 175, 177, 179, 182, 184, 188, 191, 194, 196, 201, 203, 212, 218, 219, 222, 223, 225, 228, 229, 255, 256, 259, 266, 268, 273
 McElroy, Paul 160
 McGee, Rev. Gene 55
 McGee, Rev. John 15, 27, 30, 48, 49, 50, 53, 90
 McIntosh, Hal 234, 236, 244
 McIntosh, Linda 236
 McKee, Dr. and Mrs. Gil 162
 McKee, Rev. Mike 115, 162, 167, 200, 204
 McKeithan, Debbie Crouch 221, 228, 447
 McLaney, Carol Ann 59
 McLaney, Jr., George 97, 115
 McLean, Theatus 26, 27
 McLelland, Jo Ann 125, 127
 McPhail, Liz 283
 McRacken, Mrs. Margaret 62
 Mecklenburg Baptist Association 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, 36, 40, 42, 45, 71, 76, 87, 91, 92, 94, 101, 104, 107, 109, 114, 144, 161, 164, 166, 169, 171, 177, 182, 189, 196, 206, 207, 210, 213, 223, 224, 235, 260, 270, 274, 294, 305, 307, 331
 Melton, Rev. Hal and Roberta 130, 149
 Middlebrooks, Matt 314, 338
 Miller, Dr. Carlton 148, 160, 227
 Miller, David 330, 416, 422
 Miller, Debbie 226, 268
 Miller, Dr. Harold 22, 39
 Miller, Karen 330, 332, 336, 416
 Mitchell-Sasser, Shelia 437
 Monhollon, Jim 87, 89, 115
 Monhollon, Mrs. Jim (Patsy) 90, 109
 Moody, Austin 89, 90, 143, 190
 Moody, Dennis 311
 Moore, Donna 148
 Moore, Dr. Frank R. 5, 6, 7, 14, 326
 Moore, Randy 115, 135, 246
 Moore, Starr 278
 Moose, Christa 327, 338, 344, 353, 395
 Morgan, Jim 287, 303
 Morgan, Peggy 287
 Morris, Rev. Chris 320, 333, 354, 372, 432, 437
 Morris, Debbie 342
 Morris, Kevin 381
 Morton, Pam 430

INDEX

Moss, Bob 250
 Moss, Jr., Nita and Harry C. 128, 139, 249, 250, 417
 Motsinger, Carolyn 117, 232
 Motsinger, Debra 232, 355
 Motsinger, Don 151, 192, 224
 Mullins, Dr. John 178
 Mulloy, Robert E. 51
 Mulzet, Greg 277
 Myers, Charles T. 80, 92
 Myers, Harvey 106, 108
 Myers, Melanie 118, 126, 134, 154, 168, 179, 185, 192, 198, 430
 Myers, Shirley 430

N

Nebel, Arthur 246
 Needy, Celeste 66
 Neel, Randy 332
 Nelms, Jean 434, 436
 Nevels, Kathleen 27, 30
 Neville, Celia 178
 Nicholson, Howard 73
 Niven, Jim 57
 Norman, Bob 132
 Norris, Cindi 126
 Noyes, Wanda 263

O

Odom, Gary 363, 435
 O'Hara, George 104, 105
 O'Neal, Dawn 425
 O'Neal, Rev. Tom 195, 202, 212, 226, 237, 273, 418
 Owen, Mrs. Becky 101, 121
 Owen, Jim 130
 Oxendine, Jesse 440
 Oxendine, Jewel 194

P

Page, Susan 314, 343
 Pangle, Anita 303, 368, 406, 418, 431, 442
 Pangle, Lee 333
 Pappas, Cheryl 333
 Parks, Keith 315
 Patnaik, Rev. Theophilus 34, 78
 Patterson, Charlie 67
 Payne, Eddie 103, 173, 238
 Payne, Mr. and Mrs. Meredith 173

INDEX

- Payseur, Jerry 76
 Pemberton, Missy 277
 Perks, Jeff 296, 303, 306, 309, 314
 Perry, Mary 292, 298, 302
 Perry, Sam 292
 Peterson, Clara 127, 130
 Pfaff, Sandra 80
 Pfaff, Tom 19, 51, 52, 57, 58, 62, 122, 152, 159
 Philson, Tom 270, 350, 355, 370, 414
 Pinkerton, Rev. Ron 294
 Pinkerton, Ronna 291, 309
 Player, Frances 383
 Player, Ginger 117, 133
 Player, Martha 332
 Player, Noelle 132, 145, 154, 179, 383, 429
 Player, Woody 383, 429
 Plonk, Susan 332
 Polk, Brian 125
 Ponder, Sara 226, 239
 Poovey, Dr. Harry 418, 442, 444, 445, 449
 Pope, Cindy 155
 Pope, Earl 90, 152, 216, 218, 225, 270, 276, 317, 350, 353, 354, 368, 442
 Pope, Jimmy 73
 Poplin, Bonnie 160
 Poplin, Bronwyn 146
 Porter, Drew 293, 294, 299, 306, 308, 320, 323
 Porter, Katie 341
 Porter, II, Rev. Lee 293, 294, 299, 305, 306, 308, 313, 318, 320, 323, 325
 Porter, William M. 3
 PrimeTimers Club 334, 339, 358, 367, 371, 380, 383, 419, 430, 434, 435, 437, 446, 448
 Pritchard, Bob 363
 Privette, Mrs. Tom 29
 Prosser, Dr. Bo 64, 332, 334, 336, 337, 339, 341, 342, 344, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 353, 355, 356, 357, 358, 361, 362, 363, 364, 367, 370, 374, 376, 378, 381, 382, 384, 385, 387, 388, 389, 390, 394, 398, 399, 400, 401, 403, 404, 405, 406, 408, 410, 411, 412, 413, 415, 417, 418, 420, 421, 423, 424, 425, 433, 441, 447, 449
 Prosser, Gail 332
 Pyatt, David 303

Q

- Quillan, John 185

R

- Reames, Dr. William L. 164, 289
 Redwine, Bob 32
 Reid, Bobbie 403
 Rentz, Rev. Ben 146, 253, 260, 264, 268, 270, 311

INDEX

- Rentz, Rachel 253, 329
 Richardson, Sandra J. 318, 324
 Richbourg, Jr., Tom 126
 Richmond Baptist Theological Seminary 278, 280, 288, 289, 297, 298, 299, 300, 315, 319, 328, 349, 352, 353, 354, 362, 366, 374, 375, 376, 377, 385, 387, 432
 Riddick, Dr. Leon 151
 Rimmer, Catherine 328
 Ritsema, LuAnn 389
 Rivers, Paula 239
 Robertson, Bill and Audrey 175
 Robinson, Jim and Carolyn 162
 Robinson, Linda 117
 Robinson, Rev. Randy 113, 115, 118, 121, 123, 126, 141, 275
 Roney, Kelly 426
 Ross, Arthur 19, 29
 Roth, Elizabeth and Wolfgang 179
 Rouse, Herb 38
 Rowe, Mrs. Reagen 41
 Royal, Gertrude 129, 140, 173, 235
 Royal, Lee 159, 225, 260, 264, 350
 Royster, Jim 58
 Ruble, Cindy Ring 315, 318, 376, 415, 420, 433
 Ruble, Eddie 318, 376 415
 Rundquist, Wes 270
 Rutland, Jr., Sam 118, 122, 123, 130, 131, 152, 216, 218, 224, 268, 270, 284, 300, 305, 350
 Rutland, III, Rev. Sam 144, 162, 176
 Rutledge, Jean 117
 Rutledge, Larry 117

S

- Salley, Rev. Fred 205, 229, 252
 Sanders, John W. 47, 50, 54, 65, 67, 70
 Sanford, Donna 256
 Sanford, Mike 256
 Sanges, David 192
 Sasser, James (Jim) 347, 357, 367
 Schofield, Kathy 355
 Scruggs, William M. 3
 Scruggs, Jr., W. M. 5
 Seagraves-Radford, Pamela 178
 Seagraves, Tony 185
 Seastrom, Gail 180
 Secrist, Wayne 161
 Self, Sandi 109
 Sentelle, David B. 170, 242
 Seward, Marlan 247

INDEX

- Sexton, Keith 162, 164
 Shannon, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce 184
 Shannon, Jane 97, 125
 Shaw, Karen 242
 Shepherd, Glenna 127
 Shepherd, Gordon 127
 Sherman, Dr. Cecil 173, 315, 362, 366, 374, 376, 384, 390
 Sherman, Dot 366
 Shinn, George 158, 161, 170, 179, 247, 256, 258, 259, 261, 339
 Shoemaker, Amy 415
 Shoemaker, Rev. Hal 27, 28, 325, 326, 332, 333, 337, 338, 340, 372,
 Shoemaker, Jim 329
 Shoemaker, Rennie 337
 Shore, Cheryl 182
 Short, Mrs. Loretta 79
 Simerson, Andrea 76
 Simerson, H. Y. (Bert) 72, 76, 80, 84
 Simpson, Harmon 363
 Simpson, Scott 146
 Simpson, Shane 160
 Sipe, Kathy 333, 344
 Sistrunk, Harriet 4
 Slade, Betty 113
 Sloan, Martha 314
 Sloan, Rev. Wendell 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 174, 199, 208, 209, 237, 269, 280, 294, 305,
 306, 314, 361
 Smith, Anne and Leonard 147
 Smith, Arthur 24, 29, 38, 51, 58, 62, 64, 80, 87, 91, 97, 103, 120, 159, 161, 334
 Smith, Betty 146
 Smih, Beulah 49, 66, 85, 86
 Smith, Carolyn 143, 148
 Smith, Dorothy 46, 66, 80
 Smith, Greg 323, 325, 326, 341
 Smith, Jan 340, 354
 Smith, Jeff 397
 Smith, Jewel 270
 Smith, Mary 122, 177
 Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar 149
 Smith, Ralph 36
 Smith, Rena 140, 176
 Smith, Rev. Robert T. 130, 142, 146, 147
 Smith, Sarah 232
 Smith, Sonny 30, 176
 Smith, Stephen Wayne 149
 Smith, Rev. Steve 130, 139, 176, 177, 181, 210, 211, 214, 231, 269
 Sofras, Pol 136
 Sorenson, Barbara 113

INDEX

- Southeastern Baptist Seminary 27, 32, 106, 113, 115, 116, 119, 125, 130, 139, 142, 144,
 147, 149, 150, 154, 158, 161, 162, 163, 165, 168, 174, 183, 188, 189, 190, 191, 202,
 205, 209, 228, 235, 240, 242, 278, 280, 288
 Southern Baptist Seminary 8, 9, 45, 70, 75, 77, 80, 95, 129, 130, 131, 134, 139, 142, 144,
 147, 159, 162, 164, 170, 177, 183, 189, 194, 226, 228, 230, 236, 288, 317, 319, 322,
 325, 352, 368, 372, 430
 Southwestern Baptist Seminary 10, 11, 16, 176, 188, 253, 432
 Sparks, Montez 192
 Spencer, Kevin 294, 296, 304
 Squires, Mike and Gloria 260
 Stabler, Dennis 110, 115, 119, 123, 126, 128, 136
 Stacy, Dr. Wayne 363
 Staggs, Connie 292
 Stahr, Karen 403
 Stamper, Scottie 368, 371, 376, 378, 381, 384, 389, 413, 418, 421, 427, 429
 Stancil, Shirley 33
 Staples, Melinda 415
 Still, Charles 224
 Still, Emily 313
 Stipp, Leigh 160
 Stith, Marge 412, 436
 Stockdale, Jeanette 211
 Stocker, Tishe 59
 Stokes, Mr. and Mrs. Fred 130
 Stokes, Nancy 182
 Stokes, Wade 298, 300, 323, 355
 Stout, Becky 288, 299, 302, 312, 318, 326, 363, 401, 420, 423, 430, 434, 438
 Stroud, Miss Anita 36
 Stroud, Carolyn 140
 Stroud, Charles 173, 177
 Strowd, Carolyn 182
 Stump, Jim 428
 Stump, Patsy 423
 Sudderth, Maude 177, 270
 Sudderth, Ramon 177, 223
 Summers, Jeff 336, 349, 371, 382, 409, 420, 432, 437
 Swann, Beth 355
 Sweeney, Faye 261, 264
 Swicegood, Mrs. George 173
 Swindler, Miss Juanita 27

T

- Tate, Ashley 180
 Taylor, Mrs. J. B. 72
 Teachey, Roberta 289, 335, 380
 Terlizzi, Vannah 244
 Thompson, Byrd 328

INDEX

- Thompson, Greg 401
 Thompson, Kimberlie 401
 Thompson, Marshall 59, 60, 61, 98
 Thomps, Rev. Ruth 151, 180, 186
 Thompson, Teeny 130
 Tillotson, Mrs. Grace 62, 81
 Tillotson, Jean 43, 50, 56
 Tinker, Gene 159
 Todd, Marti 344, 379, 383, 394, 423, 427, 433, 435
 Townsend, Katherine 334
 Treadwell, Rev. William 267
 Trexler, Susan and Donnie 233
 Triple L's Club 110, 140
 Trockenbrot, Tim 312
 Trull, Gail 143
 Tucker, Beverly 438
 Tucker, Charles 186
 Tucker, Elizabeth 168
 Tucker, Rev. Keithen M. 142, 144, 158, 174, 273
 Tucker, Russell E. 2, 3, 60, 61, 62, 74, 92, 131, 160
 Tucker, Sarah Crouch 158
 Tucker, Rev. Wade D. 143, 146, 149, 151, 152, 153, 155, 158, 164, 167, 168, 170, 171, 174, 180
 Tunstall, Anne 313, 436, 447
 Tunstall, Beth 314
 Tunstall, Bob 233, 447
 Tunstall, Rob 253, 447

U

- Ungerbuehler, Alice 29, 34, 36, 43, 110
 Ungerbuehler, Richard 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 43, 111
 UpDyke, Bruce 334, 338
 UpDyke, Sharon 332, 334, 343, 346
 Upton, Jack B. 84, 115
 Uttley, Janice 115, 129, 141, 196

V

- Vacation Bible School 11, 32, 46, 60, 68, 77, 86, 127, 142, 169, 183, 208, 236, 263, 292, 314, 317, 327, 364, 366, 376, 377, 385, 386, 399, 410, 421, 423, 425, 442
 Vestal, Philip 383
 Vestal, Shantel 383
 Vincent, Elizabeth 117
 Vinroot, G. E. 5, 6
 Vinroot, Richard 6, 64, 307
 Vosburgh, Jr., Mrs. E. B. (Tackie) 42, 71

W

- Wade, Dr. Luther 402
 Walker, Mr. and Mrs. B. B. 128
 Walker, Bunnie 363, 406
 Walker, Dr. Catherine 26, 27
 Walker, Jeff 76, 80, 119, 148
 Walker, Mike 342, 355, 363, 388, 413
 Walker, Patty 95, 303
 Wallace, Cam 198, 212, 221
 Wallace, Debra 163, 221, 232, 244, 249, 270, 294, 323, 346, 356, 370, 376, 380, 390, 409
 Wallace, Martha 326
 Walters, Rev. Doris 259
 Warren, Dr. C. C. 6, 20, 27, 30, 42, 49, 53, 92, 99, 107
 Warren, Mrs. C. C. 48, 94
 Warren, Jarvis 39
 Warren, Missy 299, 325, 326
 Waters, Charles 445
 Watson, Sarah 189, 208, 214, 272, 280, 288, 294, 314, 316, 333, 338, 353
 Webster, Leslie 127
 Weekley, Jr., Rev. H. Gordon 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 109, 116, 134, 196, 229, 234, 235, 246, 301, 321, 326, 326, 329, 352, 379,
 Weekley, Laura Glasgow 108
 Weekley, Steve 8, 62, 64, 65, 108
 Welborne, Dr. and Mrs. Barry 189
 Welborne, Eric 342
 Welborne, Neil 254
 Welling, Sr., Al 223
 Welling, Lillian 232, 329
 West, Beth 59
 West, Jim 257, 279, 288
 Wester, Pam 59
 Whitaker, Rev. Dennis 154, 155, 161, 164, 211, 216, 273, 354
 White, Bill 192
 White, Joe 79
 Whitescarver, Rev. Oscar S. 18, 23, 27, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37, 41, 67
 Whiteside, Joe 115
 Williams, Allen 303
 Williams, Bill 52
 Williams, Gary 123
 Williams, Larry 308
 Williams, Martha 15, 16, 29
 Williams, Paula 187
 Williams, Terra Gay 186
 Williams, Dr. William Harrison 19, 20, 27, 35, 41, 66
 Wilson, Bobbye Webster 107, 121, 125
 Wilson, Mrs. Grady 8, 59, 94, 124
 Wilson, Rev. Grady 8, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 27, 38, 41, 51, 53, 55, 59, 65, 67, 73, 78, 88, 90, 91, 93, 94, 103, 105, 124, 125, 141, 152, 182

INDEX

- Wilson, Linda 59, 73
 Wilson, Mercer 58
 Wilson, Mrs. Mercer 71
 Wilson, Nancy Carol 59, 93, 94, 99, 124
 Wilson, Ray 121
 Wingate, Shirley 180, 238
 Winstead, Sharon 330, 406
 Withrow, Courtney 320
 Withrow, Paula 225, 232, 350, 354
 Withrow, Ron 225, 350, 354, 370
 WMU 35, 36, 42, 45, 46, 48, 54, 56, 58, 62, 66, 75, 76, 84, 90, 93, 105, 106, 107, 119,
 124, 125, 133, 135, 140, 141, 142, 147, 159, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 177, 178,
 180, 181, 182, 184, 187, 192, 195, 206, 207, 213, 229, 230, 237, 249, 250, 261, 270,
 271, 275, 282, 313, 323, 328, 330, 331, 333, 335, 338, 342, 344, 345, 348, 354, 361,
 365, 371, 379, 381, 383, 388, 395, 402, 406, 418, 421, 427, 434, 440, 444
 Wood, Sarah Lou 130
 Woody, Rev. David 353, 354, 355, 364, 365, 367, 372, 376, 377, 386, 390, 405, 410, 411,
 414, 417, 422, 423
 Woody, Emilie 353
 Wright, Aaron 119
 Wright, Rev. Julia S. 431, 434, 438, 443
 Wylie, Jim 303, 361, 366, 387, 397, 401, 412

Y

- Yancey, Jewell 329
 Yates, Carolyn 343
 Young, Sally 121

Z

- Zweier, Bob 358



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Dr. James H. Sasser, a native of Ellerbe, North Carolina, came to Charlotte in 1960 to begin a 40-year teaching career in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) until his retirement in December 1997. His specialties were American History, North Carolina History, and the American Civil War. In addition, he has been active in the church, community affairs and Lionism.

He and his wife, Shelia, joined Providence in February 1992. Since 1992, he has served as a deacon, Sunday School teacher, usher, member of several committees, and taught Discipleship Seminars – Baptist History and Daniel and Revelation. Shelia is active in Sunday School and sings in the Sanctuary Choir, Senior Adult Choir, and the Adult Ensemble.



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